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More About Italy and India

JESSIE DUNCAN

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Poems p. 69-84

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More About Italy and India

by

Jessie Duncan

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The Hindu creed is here described
By one who loves this nation,
And unto Christ the Lord ascribed
The glory of salvation.

The herald's voice is still unheard
In many distant places,
Proclaiming God's own blessed Word
In all its winning phases.

All we who love our Christian creed
And joy in its salvation,
Still owe a debt to India's need
For its long deprivation.

Introduction to Religion Weighed

Some sixty years ago candidates joining the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in the Malwa district of Central India (now the mission field of the United Church of Canada) were required to study, as one of their text books, a small treatise entitled Religion Weighed. It was written in Hindi and printed in the Nagari characters and had for its theme a Christian catechist addressing an imaginary audience of illiterate, unenlightened Hindus. He is speaking of the religion they profess and practice, showing its inadequacy and inability to give salvation to its devotees, and finally he proceeds to explain how the Christian religion can enlighten the soul and give full and free salvation to all, through faith in Jesus Christ who is the true Incarnation of God.

As I was at that time quite ignorant concerning Hinduism and its many gods and goddesses it made an impression on my mind which has extended to this day. So, as I have still my old Hindi copy of the book, it has occurred to me that a free translation of it might interest some Canadian friends, helping them to realize something of the depth of ignorance and superstition into which Hinduism has sunk so many of India's people.

You may think that some of the talks recorded here are crude and childish, but, in spite of the successful missionary work that has been carried on for the past one hundred years or so, I am convinced that among the 500,000 villages of India there are many thousands of people who are still untouched by the Christian message, and still unreached by the comparative few who are workers in that great harvest field.

Under the present government some splen-

did plans have been formulated for the help of India's people, and efforts are being made to effect them, but its chief concern is still for their bodily and mental needs and their spiritual ones are left to those who realize that the knowledge of the true God and of Jesus Christ is what can alone satisfy man's spiritual nature, and fill his greatest need.

Religion Weighed

PART I.

The text reads somewhat as follows:

Beloved, if someone should ask you if you are at all concerned about getting rid of your sins and of making provision for the future life, you would reply, "We certainly are concerned about those things for, if not, why should we be so diligent about our religious duties—doing puja (worship), bathing, giving alms and doing other deeds of merit. We do them all in order that our sins may be taken away and our future life be provided for".

It is true that you do all those things and it is a good thing to seek for salvation for, in a short time, you and all others will be called to go before God to give an account to Him of all that you have done during your lifetime. But when we consider that God is holy and righteous, and that we are all sinful and impure, how is it possible for us to appear, with confidence, before this Holy God? Let us consider this matter for it is an important one, and it is imperative for you to find the true way of obtaining salvation during your life time, lest when you feel the need of repentance it may be too late, for after death nothing can be done.

It is a fact that the wicked spirit Satan has led people so far astray that very few care to listen to words of righteousness or to learn about eternity. When one speaks of worldly things they listen eagerly, or if one tells an amusing story or talks about money or any kind of trickery they listen, but if one speaks of God and tries to give instruction about good things their hearts and faces are turned away from it. Because of sin the minds of people

have become so influenced by it that they desire to hear and speak of wicked things instead of good. Indeed they are so sunk in sin that very few have a desire to escape from this state, and very few are real seekers after salvation. They think only of the body, what they shall eat, and what they shall drink, and when their bodily wants are satisfied they remain carefree. Such people care only for the body and neglect the soul which has its home in the body. They preserve the clay and throw away the pearl, and are like the fool who cares only for the house and forgets the house's master. So whoever pays attention to his soul's salvation does well.

Now, let us enquire by what means the soul's salvation can be acquired. This is a question that should be carefully studied lest you decide on a false way and your hope be found to be false.

When you think of investing some of your money you first make enquiries about the person to whom you propose to lend it, if he is a safe person or otherwise, and only when you are sure about his integrity you lend it to him. So since you are so careful about saving your money should you not be careful about the saving of your soul, which is of more value than all the world's wealth? Should you take any man's word or advice without examining it? Should you not choose your guru with great care? If you do not there is a grave danger of losing your soul, and if you lose that you lose everything. So since you try to win salvation through puja and doing works of merit let us now test them carefully on the scales of thought.

The Hindus in temples and in other places set up idols of wood, stone and other materials, and worship them. Let us consider therefore what an idol is. The carpenter takes a piece

of wood and with his tools cuts out of it an idol. He puts in it hands, feet, mouth, nose and ears, and after painting it he sells it to some one. Then from the same piece of wood he makes a rolling pin or some other article, and with the shavings he makes a fire with which to cook his food or warm himself. Again the stone carver breaks a stone into two parts and with one he forms a Krishna or a Mahadev and with the other part he makes a grind stone or a doorstep. Again a worker in brass makes an idol of brass, and a goldsmith makes one of gold or silver, and you, with your own hands, make one of clay, and considering them gods or goddesses set them up for worship. Then if they are made of silver or gold they must be locked up in a room, and guarded carefully lest they be stolen. Beloved, have you not enough sense to know that just as waterpots, drinking vessels and rolling pins are only things of earth, wood or metal so are these idols? They have eyes but they see not, ears have they but they hear not, feet but they walk not, hands but they touch not, throats but they do not breathe. If you break them or mar them they are not aware of it. They allow themselves to be cut, and being burnt they burn, there is no life in them.

We also know that a mechanic is much greater than the things that he makes, so if you worship the things made by a workman why do you not worship the maker himself?

Friends, you know that God is the Maker of the whole universe, so can the Maker of all things be made by the hands of any workman?

But perhaps you will say that until an idol is consecrated by the hand of a Brahman you do not consider it a god and worship it. Now we ask you how can a Brahman make a god out of clay, wood or stone? They, like other

men, are all subject to anger, lust, covetousness, etc. So the truth is that they, like other man, are weak and helpless. They cannot make a beast or a man so how can they make a god? It is impossible.

Then again, the idols that you people make are extremely ugly and shapeless. Look at the idol of Brahma. He has four heads. Look at Ganesh who has an elephant's head. And look at Shiv. His mouth is open with his tongue hanging out. In one hand he has a blade and in the other a skull filled with blood. His feet are planted on a dead body and he looks as if he is always killing and drinking blood. Then look at Mahadev, his body is covered with ashes and he has a snake around his neck, while a garland of skulls hangs down in front. His eyes are red with dhatura, and with his hideous face he looks like a master of demons. Consider how one can worship such an abominable and ugly image.

Listen to a parable. Should a child of yours be so ignorant and foolish as to make an idol of clay or wood and, deeming it to be his father, should worship it saying, "Oh father, you have given me birth and fed me, I worship you", you would certainly say, "My child you have become mad, how can you put my name upon a piece of clay or wood and worship it?". Listen. God has given you birth. He is the Father of the world and we are His children. So when you people make an idol and give it the name and qualities of your Creator how can you be considered wise? Will God not say, "Alas, my children have forgotten Me and set up idols and gone astray?" God has neither shape nor form because He is a spirit. No one has ever seen Him, nor can see Him. He has no form nor shape, and has forbidden us to make idols to worship. So those who make

them or cause them to be worshipped are sinful and foolish.

Then again, I ask you what benefit can be derived from the worship of idols? Can images of wood or stone take away your sins and troubles? Can worshipping an idol give you salvation? Never. By doing so you only increase your sin and unworthiness. Now tell me, when your wife or daughter worships Mahadev's image will their hearts become pure or impure? Even if they should escape from impurity, they will never be led to think of righteousness and truth.

We know that some people say that we do not worship the idols of wood and stone themselves but the gods whom these images represent. All right, let us see if the gods whose images you worship are worthy or not. It is known from your scriptures that all the gods and goddesses and incarnations were subject to evil passions such as lust, covetousness etc. We learn from them that Brahma committed adultery with his daughter and told a lie, for which reason one of his heads was cut off. Vishnu committed the same sin with the wife of Jalandhar, and Mahadev also in the village of Shivapur with a widow, and that he was always drunk with bhang and dhatura. Krishna used to steal curds and butter and acted shamelessly with the laundry maids. Ram went to Ceylon and killed Rawan who was a Brahman and thousands of other people. But how far shall I continue to tell you of the misdeeds of your gods? They are all written in your sacred books, and from them you can learn that every kind of evil, however great, has been committed by them. So tell me is it right to worship either them or their images?

But perhaps you will tell me that the 'mighty can do no wrong, and should not be blamed'. The answer to this is, that from your books it

is learned that "they were not mighty, but lacked might". It is true that Ram seemed to be more powerful than others because he went to Ceylon and killed thousands of people, but, if your books speak the truth, he was less powerful than Hanuman (the monkey god), for on the way to Ceylon Hanuman leaped across the sea while Ram could not do so and had to build a bridge in order to get across.

Now listen to a little more about the incarnations, for even if the stories told about them are all true, you can derive no benefit from them at all. They only came to serve their own purposes or to do some work which would yield you no benefit. It is said that the Fish incarnation came to rescue four Vedas from the sea. How does that benefit you? The Tortoise and Barah incarnations came to steady the earth. What benefit do you derive from them? Narsingh incarnation came to kill Hiranykashup. Baman incarnation came to deceive King Bali. Parsuram incarnation came to put the Kashatrias out of caste. Ram came to kill Rawan, Krishna to kill Kans. What benefit do you receive from these? Buddha incarnation came to spread false doctrine. So even if the four Vedas were taken out of the sea can that exploit save you from the sea of sin? Even if the unsteady earth was made steady your unsteady minds have not been made steadfast. Even though Rawan and others were killed your sins are not destroyed, and though others were deceived, false doctrine spread or not, tell me if believing these things your own heart's sin and guilt are taken away?

Again, it is said that all the incarnations died after obtaining their objectives, so what benefit can be received from them now? Some one says that an eleventh incarnation is coming, we are looking for him, why should he not be of benefit to us? It is said that when he comes he will

put to death all sinners. Think a little, in this 'Black Age' all men are sinful. So if this incarnation comes to destroy all sinners you, too, will be destroyed. How will that benefit you?

You know that when helpless, miserable people read the story of your incarnations and see their pictures they will surely say that they cannot be true incarnations of God because they do not display the virtues or signs of God. Can God come to kill and destroy, to deceive, to commit sin, and spread false doctrine. It is sinful to ascribe such wicked deeds to God. In incarnations of God His qualities and virtues will be seen showing that He is holy, righteous, just, true, merciful and unselfish, but there is no sign of any such qualities in your incarnations.

Such a true incarnation is Jesus Christ, and we will soon tell you much about Him, such as is written in the Holy Book of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps you will say, "We don't know whether the gods and goddesses are true or false, our gurus know, and we listen to them". It is true that you have many so-called religious teachers and that you need a teacher in order to learn about salvation, but what kind of a teacher should you have? There is a saying, "Strain water before drinking it, and test a guru before choosing him." Let us see if you people test a guru before choosing him, and what gurus are like. Every one knows that they are sinful like other men, subject to all kinds of evil passions, so if they are sinful themselves how can they free you from your sins and obtain salvation for you?

It is true that your teachers tell you many things, breathe into your ears and call themselves your saviours, and take your money and your gifts. But consider that breathing into your ears and taking your gifts are easy things

to do. And do you understand the charms that they give you, or do you benefit at all from what they teach you? One teacher tells you one thing and another tells you something else. One guru tells you one thing and another denies it. There are controversies among the gurus. Your 80,000 pundits have evolved 80,000 creeds, and the saying is, "So many gurus, so many creeds". Now tell me which of them are true and which are false? God is one, and His creed must be one. If anyone tells you that all these creeds come from God you make Him many-sided, and a deceiver. A thoughtful person will surely say that all these are inventions of man.

We ask one brother where is Calcutta? He answers, 'in the south'. Again we ask another the same question, and he says, it is 'in the north'. Again we ask a third man and he says, 'it is neither in the south or north but in the south-west'. We ask a fourth and he says, 'all three are wrong, believe me, Calcutta is in the exact west'. When so many people give a different answer whose word can we consider true, and how can we poor people get to Calcutta? So when people ask their teachers how can we obtain salvation they receive different answers, and whose word can be regarded as true? Your gurus do not teach God's word but only inventions of men, and through them no one can receive the certainty of salvation. To trust in them is like putting your trust on a grain of sand.

It is true that salvation cannot be obtained by one's own wisdom or by man's invention, for the teacher must be true, and know the true way of salvation, so that he can teach the disciples how salvation can be obtained.

Then what should be the signs of a true teacher? He should be without sin, all-knowing, powerful, without self-seeking, and merci-

ful, for such a one alone can take away your sins and give salvation. Nowhere in your midst is there such a teacher. You yourselves know that your gurus commit sin and what they teach and what they give you to do are all for their own selfish ends. They are clever at taking your money, but taking away sin is another matter. In the Christian religion there is a holy Teacher who can by His own power and merit take away the sins of His disciples. He is an Incarnation sent by God, and soon we will tell you more about Him.

Most people believe that bathing in the Ganges will rid them of sin. Now let us consider what merit there is in the water of the Ganges. When people bathe themselves in it and rub themselves with it why should their bodies not become clean? But sin which is lying, deceit, theft, anger, covetousness etc., are not outside but inside the heart, so how can they be washed away with water? If a washerman should put all the soiled clothes in a box and, after closing it, should rub away on the outside, will that cleanse the clothing that is inside the box? You know that your unclean hearts are inside the body and even if water could penetrate there it couldn't wash away your sin and unworthiness. Listen to a parable. If a thief should enter your house and steal your rupees and then go and wash in the Ganges would that absolve him from his sin? Afterwards you catch him and ask him why he stole your goods, and he answers, "Brother, why are you angry with me? I certainly committed sin, but I went away and bathed in the Ganges. Its water has such merit and power that whoever bathes in it once has all his sins washed away. Enough, I am now a holy and just man, so why are you blaming me?" If a thief should speak in that way would you excuse him? No, you

would say, "No matter how powerful and full of merit the water of the Ganges may be you are a thief, and must receive punishment". Now since you don't consider bathing in the Ganges a good excuse for theft can God accept your bathing as a good excuse for it? On the great judgment day when He takes account of your deeds and asks you why you disobeyed His commands will He accept this excuse? Brothers, do not be deceived. God will consider all such pleas as mockery and impudence.

Perhaps some one will say, "Faith is fruitful. By bathing alone sins are not cleansed away but if some one bathes in faith then the water of the Ganges will take away sin". To be sure faith is a great thing, but we ask you on what should you exercise your faith, a wrong thing or a true thing? If a man should gather pebbles believing them to be rupees will his faith be of any use, will he become a rich man? Never, because he believed in a wrong thing. Pebbles are pebbles and can never become rupees. In the same way if a man should believe that the water of the Ganges can take away sin, and bathe in it, it will only cleanse his body and not his soul.

Again, some people believe that by doing works of merit they will get to heaven. Giving to the poor and doing good to others are creditable things but if you think that by doing them your sins will be forgiven you are in error. It is good for you and all mankind to continue to do good, for God has said we should do good to others, and it is sinful not to obey Him. If we give a command to a servant and he obey us we do not say that he has gained merit by doing so. He is a servant, and receives wages, therefore it is his duty to obey. In the same way God is our Master and we are His servants. He gives us food and clothing and He commands us to do good and keep

away from evil, and if we do so we do not acquire merit by means of which sins of former times or after can be blotted out.

Then consider what those works of merit are like—a good deed with one hand and with the other theft. It often happens that by taking bribes or by deception or cheating a man acquires some money. Then to wipe out the cheating or some other sin he donates a gift or does some deed of merit. "Can a rye's worth of merit wipe out a mountain of sin?" If you do such a deed God will not consider it merit, and because of it He will not wipe away even one sin.

Listen. A man committed murder. He was caught and pleaded his case before a judge. He confessed that he had committed the murder but said that, since that time, he had performed many deeds of merit and asked that for that reason he be forgiven and set free. Tell me, will the judge accept the prisoner's word and set him free? He will not, for good deeds done cannot wipe out the murder and crime.

Then think that there are blemishes in all our good deeds, for since the heart is sinful our good deeds will also be unclean. How can sweet water come out of a bitter well, or how can pure deeds come from an unclean heart? Just as a false rupee will not pass in the marketplace so in God's sight no man's false works will be accepted, and so how can heaven be obtained in that way?

Another way you seek to obtain merit is by hiring a Brahman pundit to read to you out of your sacred books. But even if the words of the books be true, you get no benefit from listening to them, because as a rule you do not understand a word of what is read. And even if you do understand them you often hear only what is evil, for your books have many things

written in them that arouse evil thoughts in your hearts. How can you benefit by hearing of Krishna stealing the clothes of the laundry maids when they were bathing, and not returning them until they stood naked before him and pleaded for them?

Again, many people think that if they leave home and go into the jungle their sins will be remitted and their hearts become pure. But you know that if salvation can be obtained by becoming fakirs all the people would require to give up their homes, and if all should leave their homes who would till the fields? Would all not die of hunger? So the idea of becoming fakirs for salvation is a false one.

Then let us examine the conduct of the fakirs. Every one knows that with the exception of a few who truly practice austerities there are many who only pretend to practice them. Being too lazy to work they go about begging, and in the hearts of all such many evils spring up, for, just as land that is left uncultivated for a long time produces only thorns and noxious plants and becomes a jungle, so it is with them. They put ashes or caste marks on their bodies, tie on charms, count beads and beat a drum as they go around. Most of them are very covetous and vindictive, so people give of their scanty fares lest they put a curse or an evil eye upon them.

Then what benefits do the fakirs receive for the austerities they practise? Some sit between five fires drinking smoke, hang with heads downwards, lie on spikes, stand in water up to their necks, let the right arm wither by holding it upwards, remain speechless for years until they lose the power to speak, etc. Some, too, are so shameless that they go about almost naked with only a loin cloth. As long as there is some delicacy in a man he remains

human, but when he gives up shame he becomes an animal.

We conclude, therefore, that all this fakiri practise is vain. And it is not only so, but it is against God's command, for it is God's order that those who have good hands and whole limbs should earn money, become householders, and live in peace with other people. God does not wish that we become homeless, give up household duties, and become wild by living in the jungle.

In order to get rid of sin many people go on pilgrimages. There are many places of pilgrimage in India, such as Kashi (Benares) Juggernath, Badrinath etc. Those who go on pilgrimage to any of these places leave their homes, endure heat and exposure, weariness and loss of property, and what benefit do they receive? The pilgrims bathe and cleanse their bodies but water cannot cleanse their souls. The priests who live at those places are constantly bathing and helping the pilgrims to bathe, and if there is any efficacy to be received from it they should be holier and more righteous than others. But you know that they cheat and oppress pilgrims. They follow rich ones, getting them to do extra bathing so that they can get more money from them, but do not care for the poor ones. Then again they do not allow the rich ones to slip easily through their fingers, and oppress them when they find that no more money is forthcoming. Your going on pilgrimage has caused you loss of property, and the only benefit obtained has been that your bodies were washed, and that benefit could be obtained from the water of your village well. Besides you will always have the suspicion that you have not got rid of your sins.

But hearing such words or reading them some one says, "Our religion and its observ-

ances have come down to us from our forefathers so we, too, observe them." Now let us consider if it is right to observe all that your forefathers did, for if so then lying, deceit and theft should be observed for they, too, have come down from your forefathers. Listen to a parable. Some one asks a thug why he continues to rob and kill and advises him to give it up because it is a bad thing. He replies, "Why should I give up looting and killing because that has come down to us from our forefathers. They continued to steal and kill, so why should I give it up?" If anyone should speak in that way would you agree with him? Listen to another parable. There was a dhobi who loaded one side of his donkey with the clothes and on the other side hung a grindstone. People seeing this said, "Why do you act so foolishly, hang half of the clothes on one side and half on the other and you will not need the grindstone". The washerman said, "This is what our forefathers used to do, so why should I change?" The conclusion is that we should not blindly follow the example of our forefathers. A wise man will weigh everything on the scales of right thought, and if the things prove to be not right he should discard them.

Some one says, "Why should we give up the religion that the Hindus observe?" That is not the word of a wise man. If ten or twenty men should throw themselves into a well would you, like sheep, blindly follow them and jump into the well? You would not do so. In the same way ignorant and foolish men should not follow the Hindu religion without studying it, and if it is found to be false should give it up.

But you say in your minds, "the religion we follow is that of our sacred books and how can we discard their teachings?" You must see first if God's religion is to be found in your

books or only false teachings. There are four Vedas, six Shastras and eighteen Puranas. All pundits know that they do not all give the same teachings. One Veda says one thing and another says something else. Again what one Shastra says another one cuts out. The eighteen Puranas teach eighteen creeds. The Vedas contradict your Shastras, and the Shastras and Vedas are contrary to the Puranas. Then as each teaches different observances we conclude that their creeds are man-made and are not from God. God is one, and being true cannot give two or three different words, but only one. The true God must teach only one way of salvation.

From all this it is proved that your observances, gift-giving, works of merit, bathing, going on pilgrimages and all the other means of obtaining salvation written in your books, are all useless. From them you cannot obtain salvation.

Again, someone will ask, "If our Hindu religion is false how did it get established at first, and afterwards spread all over India?" The answer is, just as God's book tells us, and has become known through enlightenment, and we will try to expound it to you. By looking at the whole of creation, that is the earth, the heavens, sun, moon, and stars, the sea, mountains, trees, flowers etc. all men can know that their Creator is God and that He has great power and wisdom. It was therefore necessary that your forefathers should worship and thank Him, but they didn't do so, and thus, forgetting Him, went astray and their foolish minds became darkened. Nevertheless, through pride and thinking themselves wise and learned, they became ignorant and foolish, and began to give the glory and power of the incorruptible and invisible God to corruptible things such as men, birds, four-footed beasts,

and creeping things. Then for the worship of these they made all kinds of idols and taught the people to worship them. Was it strange then that God should give them up to do according to their evil desires unto uncleanness and foolishness? Think how a son as long as he remains under the control of his parents is saved from becoming very bad and degraded for fear of them and for shame's sake. But when he separates from his parents he often falls into all kinds of sin. It was thus with your forefathers. When they forsook the worship of God they sank into all kinds of degradation and error. And from that time until to-day you, being their descendants, have continued to go astray. Your forefathers deserted their own Master and the worship and service due to Him and gave it to gods and goddesses, to Brahmans, to rivers even, and to all kinds of false masters. Seeing any hero doing an illustrious deed or if a king became celebrated they gradually began to think him an incarnation and, deeming him to be a god, began to worship him. Thus the worship of Ram, Parsuram and Krishna became established and you follow their example. In other countries other great heroes and kings have arisen, and still do, but no one worships them, for in those countries people are wiser and consider it wrong to worship people. Your forefathers, seeing that their gurus and pundits were more learned than they, being able to read and expound the Shastras, began to worship them. Your forefathers also began to worship animals such as the cow, snakes, monkeys, birds, also, such as the peacock, rivers as the Ganges and Jumna, trees, also, as the tulsi, pepul etc. Think what a difference there is between the worship of these things and the worship of God. In the Bible it is written that the makers of idols and their worshippers become like the

idols. What wisdom is there in wood, clay, metals? None. Years ago the British were ignorant and foolish and used to worship idols. But when the Christian missionaries came amongst them and taught them the true religion they accepted it, and from that time, along with Christianity, they have received enlightenment and the darkness of error has been gradually passing away. They abolished the idols and began to establish schools and colleges, hospitals and dispensaries. They have also invented wonderful things and done much to add to man's comfort and enlightenment.

One reason is that the Christian religion is a guide to wisdom and true understanding, and where the people in India have accepted it, even here, all kinds of evil are losing ground, and the light of truth and righteousness has begun to shine forth.

The Hindu religion has no incentive in it for people to be holy and righteous, or to abhor sin. Since the gods committed sin and were guilty of drunkenness they say, "Why should we not follow their example?" As is the teacher, so is the scholar. Can a disciple be better than the god he worships?

Now my brothers, we have weighed your religion on the scales and have found it to be lightweight, and if you do not reject it and its practises, blind your eyes and harden your hearts, you will realize that salvation cannot be obtained through it. So if you remain stubborn you are knowingly risking your soul's destruction. If, while standing in the sunlight, you close your eyes and say there is no sun in the sky what can we say further?

If there be any sad and despairing among you who are seeking for forgiveness of sin and for salvation in the Hindu religion they are like to a man who, with a heavy load on

his head, thirsty and worn out, wanders about lost in a desolate region. By walking his feet have become pierced with thorns, and the hardships of the way and thirst distract him. He looks this way and that to see if there is any shelter near at hand, or a tree under which he may rest. In the distance he thinks he sees a shelter but when he reaches it he is deceived. Again he seems to see a well further on and he tries hard to reach it. At last he arrives at the place and takes out his lota to fill it with water, but alas, the well is a blind one, all dried up.

He then sits down in despair and begins to cry aloud to see if there is anyone who can help him. Soon a Brahman turns up and asks him why he is crying and screaming in this way. He answers, "I am dying of thirst, where can I find water?" The Brahman says, "First give me some money, and then I will show you". The poor man says, "Please take the money and show me". The Brahman says, "Go straight on, a short distance away you will find a well, drink there". And saying this, and taking the money he goes away. The poor man now hopes that his throat may be cooled and with this hope he revives a little. After great exertion he reaches the place that the Brahman has indicated and, sure enough, there is a well there, but it has no water in it, only mud. Now all his hopes are quenched but his thirst is not. Hopeless and despairing he sinks down in a dying state.

See, all you people who are seeking salvation in the Hindu religion are in this case. If any of you with a true desire should ask who can rid me of my burden of sins and can give me hope of salvation from my thirst, he cannot find in the dry earth of Hinduism a fulfilment of his hope. Whichever way he tries and whatever he founds his hopes on are like

grains of sand or deceitful trickery. Then, many finding that their hopes are vain say, "Everything is useless. What is to be will be", and remain without trying.

Oh brothers, it is true that your Vedas, Shrastras and Puranas are only inventions and contain stories that cause you to go astray, so, being hopeless, will you give up the thought of the hereafter? Do not do so, lest you lose your souls. If you have some disease and if your doctor does not cure you you go to another. Now we shall show you the true doctor and the true method by which your burden of sin can certainly be taken away and by which your heart's comfort and welfare can be obtained, both in this world and in the next.

PART II.

The Book in which the true religion, that is the Christian religion, is described is called the Holy Bible. We will now try to tell you what it contains.

In it is written that all men, that is as many as are in the whole world, are sinful, and on account of sin are worthy of death. Again it says that the Lord Jesus Christ came down to earth to save men from the punishment and power of sin. After great tribulation He gave up His life, rose from the dead, and went back to heaven. Now all those who believe His word, receive Him as their Saviour, and become His disciples, shall through His merit and power have their sins forgiven and receive salvation. We shall now try to explain all these things separately to you, so please listen carefully.

First, we will tell you in what state man was created. In the Bible it is written that God first created a man and his wife. They

were then holy, without sin, and pure in heart, but the wicked spirit Satan beguiled them into sin, and from that time their offspring, that is all the people of the world, became sinful. 'As is the tree so are the branches.' In this way because our first parents became sinful their descendants are sinful also. From this we know that all the people of the world whether they be rich or poor, king or subject, big or little, pundits or ignorant, Hindus or British are all guilty by nature. 'Through the pride of man, in this country, different castes and different conditions have been established, some being Brahman, some Kashatria, some Vaisya, and some Sudra, but before God there are no such castes, all men being of the same caste and having the same sinful nature.

For our instruction God gave us ten commandments and those who disobey them are sinful. Now let me describe what these sins are. Those who give up the worship of God who is without form and, believing in gods and goddesses, worship their images or cause them to be worshipped, are sinful. Those who take God's name in vain when taking an oath or lying, commit sin. And those who do not honour their parents or those older than themselves, who despise or ill-treat them, are sinful. You know that many people act in this way, they ridicule their parents, revile them, and refuse to give them food. Yes, as long as they are alive they give them trouble and sorrow, but after they are dead they honour them by going to the Ganges to perform the Shradh ceremony for them. Isn't that a crooked and perverse thing to do? As long as the parents are alive you should care for and honour them, but the evil spirit Satan says that if you despise and ill-treat them, it doesn't matter. When they die perform the Shradh rites for them and all

will be well. Now tell me whose word, God's or Satan's should be observed?

Again, anyone who commits murder, who envies and hates another, and tries to harm him, who quarrels and is angry without a cause, or does something to cause grief to another, is sinful. You know that when you are angry with your enemies you often wish for their destruction, and some people are so wicked that they give gifts to their gods or goddesses to induce them to put an end to their enemies. Alas, all of these do wrong in God's sight and are really murderers.

Anyone who commits adultery or has evil desires in his heart when he sees a woman, who uses such foul speech that the hearts of others are defiled, is sinful. One who steals and cheats such as using false weights, taking excess usury, charging too much for articles, giving light weight, or in order to cheat his master agrees with the shopkeeper to name to him a higher price, is sinful.

Again, whoever gives false witness, swears falsely, or causes another to swear to a lie, or tells any kind of a lie, who covets his neighbour's goods, and is not satisfied with what God gives him, is sinful. God's commandments are summed up in these words that we should love God with all our hearts, with all our souls, and with all our strength, which is called the first commandment. And the second is that, just as you love yourself you should love others also.

If one loves the Lord how could he give up His worship and turn to idols, how could he take God's name in vain or use it lightly? Again, if people love others like themselves how could they hate them, do them harm or tell lies about them? To love God and all men is a very great thing, and it is your duty, and

until such a love is in the heart whatever you do will be counted sin.

Now examine your hearts to find out if you have obeyed God's commands or not. Think how many evil thoughts you have had in one day even, how many sinful deeds you have done. Then as you have continued to commit them how many will have accumulated during your lifetime. They are countless. Also think of the many sins you have committed of which you are not conscious for, whether we know them or not, they are all known to God because He is omniscient, and from Him not one sin can be hidden.

When God looked upon the earth He saw that all men had disobeyed His laws and had sunk into sin, and that, according to His justtice, they were all worthy of punishment. But though God is righteous and just He is also kind and merciful. So when He saw that all men had sinned and were worthy of punishment He, through His great love and mercy, made a plan by which they might be freed from this punishment for sin.

We will now describe to you God's plan of salvation, so listen to it with great attention. God's only begotten son is Jesus Christ. He with great love and kindness came into the world to take upon Himself the punishment for our sins and save us. Again, if you ask who is this Jesus Christ, and how did He act here, we will tell you. Ever since sin came into this world God by His prophets began to tell the world that, when the time was ripe, He would send His son Jesus Christ and that they were to watch for His coming. When that time arrived He came into the country of the Jews by taking birth there. He didn't come in a conspicuous way, with majesty and power, but in a lowly manner, so that all the lowly and

sinful of earth might through His righteousness and merit receive the riches of His grace.

Like Ram, Krishna, Mahadev, and others the Lord Jesus Christ did not come to act wickedly, to fight and kill others, to deceive, or to strike and injure anyone, but He became incarnate in order to redeem sinners. He didn't come to punish sinful men but to save them from sin, and continued to do all kinds of good, to give instruction about God and truth, and to show mercy to the people. In a word, He gave sight to the blind, opened the ears of the deaf, and healed the lame and the maimed. All kinds of sick and suffering people came to Him and He healed them all. The lepers pleaded with Him saying, "Lord have mercy on us", and by His command the leprosy departed from them. Those who were tormented with evil spirits also came to Him and through His command they were healed. He also raised the dead to life as if He simply awakened them from sleep. He did good to those even who spoke evilly of Him and persecuted Him. Being reviled he reviled not again, and when He suffered He threatened not. Ignoring the great ones of the world He said, "I have not come to be served but to serve, and to give my life for many". Jesus cared nothing for the world's honours, nor favoured those in high positions but treated all alike, whether they were big or little, lowly or high, learned or ignorant, rich or poor, men or women, children or aged. Whoever came to Him He received them all whether they were sick or well or came to listen to His teachings. Being omniscient He knew who came to Him with sincere hearts and who with duplicity, such as did the great pundits, and to those He spoke words of woe. But those who came with earnestness, no matter how sinful they had been, He released them from their sins and troubles.

The sick and afflicted came to Him and they went back to their homes healed, and to the sinful and sorrowing, who wept and pleaded with Him, He gave comfort and forgiveness. And they, too, went away rejoicing and praising God.

The instruction given by the Lord Jesus Christ was such that it astonished the people who heard it and led them to say that He didn't speak like the pundits, but with authority and great power. We shall now tell you a few of His discourses. Once He said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are those who mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are those who are merciful: for they shall themselves receive mercy. Blessed are those who are pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are those, also, who are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Another time Jesus said, 'You have heard that it has been said that you should love your neighbours and hate your enemies, but I say unto you, "Love your enemies, do good to them who curse you, revile you, and persecute you, that you may be the children of your heavenly Father, because He lets His sun rise on both the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and unjust."

Another time the Lord Jesus said, "Unless you people are converted and become as little children you shall never enter the Kingdom of heaven". His meaning is, unless you give up all your pride of name, and caste and creed and become like the little children, and obey Him, you cannot obtain salvation. A ruler of

the Jews, who was a seeker after salvation, came to Jesus once by night, and to him Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Unless you are born again (that is, until your heart and mind are made new again, and you turn to God) you cannot see the kingdom of God. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the spirit is spirit." To this very same pundit Jesus said, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son that whosoever believes on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. God did not send His son into the world to condemn it, but that, through Him, it might be redeemed."

See beloved, we have given you only a few of the discourses of Jesus. If you wish to learn more you can find them written in that part of the Bible which tells about Jesus. This can be obtained from Christian pastors.

Jesus continued to teach and do such works of love and mercy, so the knowledge of Him was spread abroad in the world. But he often told His disciples that the day would come when His enemies would seize Him, hang Him on a cross and kill Him, but that He would rise again three days after. He said if He wished He could save himself from them, but for the salvation of His people He had taken this upon His own head and would give up His life for them.

All this happened just as Jesus said. One day He gave himself up into the hands of sinful men who seized Him in order to kill Him. At His trial when no fault could be found in Him even by the help of false witnesses, they declared Him guilty. Then they scourged and ill-treated Him in every way, but He spoke no word. At last they laid Him on the top of a cross, which had a beam to which another beam was attached sideways, and while it was on the ground they spread out His arms over

it and drove huge nails through His hands and feet. Then they lifted up the cross on which He was nailed and let it fall into a hole so that it remained upright. On that cross Jesus remained alive for about six hours, bleeding and in great anguish. His tormentors kept on mocking Him but, although He was in great agony, He was thinking only of them and prayed for them saying, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do". Then suddenly at the noon hour darkness spread over the earth and it remained dark until the third hour when His death took place. Just before that time He cried out with a loud voice, "It is finished", and also, "Father into thy hands I commit my spirit". When His spirit left Him there was a great earthquake, and some dead persons issued from their graves and showed themselves to many people.

After this two noblemen who were disciples of Jesus went without fear to the governor and begged for His body and, receiving permission, they lowered it to the ground, took out the nails from His hands and feet, wrapped the body in a large shroud and buried it in a grave that was owned by one of them that had been dug out of a hillside. They then rolled a huge stone over the mouth of the cave and departed.

His enemies, however, remembered that Jesus had said He would rise again on the third day, and so they set a watch over the tomb to guard it lest anyone should open it.

The Lord's body remained in the grave until the third day, but listen to what happened. Early that morning there was another earthquake and an angel of God came down from heaven and rolled away the stone from the mouth of the cave, and Jesus came out of it alive.

He showed Himself to His disciples and to

others for a few days, and spoke to them. Then one day when they were assembled together He said to them, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go therefore and baptise the people of every nation in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all that I have taught you". After saying this and blessing them, while they were watching, he was separated from them and ascended up to heaven, going back to His Father.

See beloved, I have related to you a little about the Lord Jesus Christ. Do think about it and try to understand it.

If you should ask me why such a righteous person should have suffered such anguish and pain, know that He suffered it all that He might bear the guilt of the world's sin, and thus satisfy the justice and righteousness of God.

Listen to a parable. A certain man got a thousand rupees as a loan from a moneylender and promised to pay it back, with the interest, in exactly one year's time. The year passed and the moneylender asked for his rupees and the interest. The poor man had nothing with which to repay the loan and he found himself in a sad state. In this time of distress a friend of the debtor went to the money lender and said, "As the one thousand rupees and the interest are now due I myself will give it to you in full". With great joy the moneylender received the payment and gave a receipt for it and, through the friend's kindness, the whole debt of the debtor was wiped out. Will not the poor debtor be very happy about it, that all that he could not pay had been paid for him, and will he not look upon his friend as a great benefactor and thank him?

In this way on account of sin all of us have become debtors to God, and we have nothing

to pay by which the debt can be wiped out, because our righteousness and so-called merits are all worthless. If we remain in this hopeless and sad state we will certainly be lost, for God, being a just God and dispenser of punishment, cannot disregard the debt and release the debtor. Now realize how our great friend the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became our substitute and paid the debt for us. His love and kindness are so deep, and His power and merit so great, that He took upon himself the burden of our sin that we might receive forgiveness and salvation. In doing this He suffered great anguish, bore the guilt of those sins, and died for us, and thus satisfied the justice of God and reconciled the sinner to Him. Oh, the depth of the love of God for us, and the wonder of the love of Christ! Who can fathom them?

Now in hearing this should you not be happy and take from the hand of Christ forgiveness for your sins, and full salvation, and love Him?

See how great is the love of the Lord Jesus Christ for you. You have never done anything worthy or acquired merit enough that He should love you. From your birth until now you have continued to sin and to disobey the commandments of God, nevertheless He has continued to love you.

Suppose that a beggar to whom you have shown kindness should afterwards steal your goods and try to harm you day by day, would you still love him? No. You would consider him a wicked person and drive him away, and not allow him to come before you. See, that condition is exactly yours. God continues to show love and mercy to you and to feed you, and what are you doing? Every day you exhibit enmity towards Him and break His laws. He has said that you should not steal nor deceive anyone, should not revile anyone nor

tell lies, but you act proudly and selfishly and do many such things. Is that not treating God badly? Does God in return show any enmity towards you? No. He loves the whole world and because of that love gave up His dearly loved Son that He might save you from perishing, and Christ took upon Him our sins that He might give us salvation.

Thinking of these things do not your hearts become softened? If they are not affected by this great love what other thing will do it? And if you consider this message a light thing and scorn it, would it not be proper for God to punish you?

Let us consider for a while longer the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. When He saw that all the people of the world were guilty and worthy of punishment He said to His Father, "The people of the world are certainly sinful and worthy of punishment but I will become their substitute. I will go down into the world, take bodily form, and will take their punishment. I will give up my life for them in order to redeem them. By this your righteousness and justice will be satisfied, because I will suffer the punishment for them. Thus you will be able to show mercy and love to all those who will take refuge with you, and you can give them forgiveness and salvation". The fruit of their sin I will take upon myself and they may have the fruit of righteousness for which I have taken the punishment. Then they being counted righteous may be received into heaven". God was very pleased with the plan of Jesus and said, "You are my beloved son in whom I am well-pleased". Your desires and mine agree. Go into the world and do as you have said and become the Saviour of all, and by your merit and righteousness wipe out the sin and redeem them. All who believe shall be received and forgiven."

So you see, to save sinners from their sins and from hell the Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven into the world and took on himself a human form. He gave up the glory and joy He had there, and came into this world of sin and death in a very lowly fashion. In heaven He was the Master of the whole world, and everything was His. He gave it all up and became little, and poor and suffering. Isn't that showing great love? Then think how much sorrow and anguish that poor innocent One endured, how much envy and enmity, how much reviling He endured silently. He did it all for the salvation of the world. Was not that love? This sinless One was beaten and bruised, thorns pierced His brow and He was scourged. Into His hands and feet nails were driven, His body was stained with blood, His nerves were lacerated, and all this the Lord endured for the salvation of the sinful. Tell me, wasn't this great love? Think also that the Lord Jesus was without sin and was gentle and pure in heart, for there was no taint of sin in Him. Enough, all the pain and suffering He endured was for the redemption of the world. We are the sinners who are worthy of punishment, and, in our stead, yes, for the whole world, the Lord bore all this. Again we ask you was not this great love? Does not your heart melt at the thought of it? Love produces love. Will the Lord's love not produce love in your hearts? Have your hearts become so hardened that love has no effect on them? Have they become such waste desert land that trees of love will not grow in them?

Now realize that the Lord Jesus Christ came from God to be the Saviour of the whole world, not for one nation or country alone, but for all nations and countries. Jesus, before He left to return to heaven gave a command to

His disciples that they were to go into every country to give the news of salvation to all the people. So they obeyed and went into many countries and preached, and from that time people have been turning to Christ, giving up their false faiths and becoming the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. And, by God's great mercy, pastors and teachers have come to India also to spread the glad news, and many here are accepting salvation. Christ is the Saviour of the Hindus, and beside Him there is no other.

He is a Saviour such as the simple people need. He is holy, separate from all kinds of sin. He is powerful and almighty, kind and merciful, the enemy of sin but the friend of sinners. He has all the qualities necessary for a true Incarnation of God. Those who desire and take refuge with Him can find from Him wisdom and life.

Now, you must consider what you must do in order to receive this great salvation. The answer is found in God's Holy Bible. The Lord Jesus Christ said that whosoever believes and is baptized shall be saved, but whosoever believeth not shall be condemned. Thus there are these two things you must do to be saved. 1st. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and 2nd, be baptized. The meaning of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ is, that being concerned about your sin and anxious for salvation you give up your own belief and hope of merit and salvation through it, and put your faith on the Lord Jesus Christ, and believe that through His merits and righteousness which He has acquired you may have forgiveness of sins. That He is your Lord, your Teacher, your Saviour and Redeemer. That you with a true heart come to Him and become His disciple.

Then, what is the meaning of being baptized?

When any one decides to become a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ it is necessary for him to confess his belief in Him before others. Some one may say, "Whether one hears of it or not, may we not in our secret hearts believe on Him, so why should it be necessary to reveal it?" The Lord in His religion has established a rite or ceremony by which His disciples may be known. It is not something magic or a charm which is breathed into a person, but a water ceremony which those who desire it may take in order to reveal to others openly that they have become Christ's disciples. The new disciple receives baptism by water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the heart of the true disciple the Spirit of God takes His dwelling, teaching and instructing him, so that he may grow in wisdom. He thus learns to hate sin and begins to do all kinds of good deeds, and keeps on doing good.

On hearing about this or reading about it, some one will say, "But if we give up our Hindu rites and ceremonies and become disciples of Christ we shall certainly lose our caste, become separated from our friends and relatives and caste companions, and will be despised". But beloved, if you really wish for salvation you will not heed what your caste people will say but will say, "We will become disciples of Christ to win salvation and to make sure of heaven". If you tell lies or commit any kind of sin, however great, you will not be put out of caste, because all kinds of wicked people can stay in it, but if, for your own salvation and future happiness, you give up wicked deeds and become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ you are put out of caste. Think that those who thus lose their caste are blessed, because they are now counted among the brethren of Christ. Such a caste

society is accursed. Also consider whose word is the greater God's or your caste people's, or which will be the greater help to you.

Then, if you become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and people despise and persecute you it will only be for a short time, and when you die the Lord will receive you into heaven. There you will live happily and in great comfort forever. And if for fear of your caste people you hide your faith you will not suffer persecution, but after death in the day of judgment the Lord will say, "You obeyed your caste people's word and despised Mine therefore you are not worthy to be received into heaven. All you who commit iniquity depart from me". Then instead of being with your caste people you will be with Satan and the evil spirits, and remain in misery and anguish.

Now dear Hindus, if you truly have a concern for your future life believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with a true heart.

You must not think that by using the name of Jesus Christ we are ignoring the name of God. Not at all. God is our Creator and Preserver, but we know that God is holy and righteous and that all the people of the world have become sinful, and thus have become separated from God, and that there was no point of contact between us. Then the Lord Jesus Christ became our reconciler. He bore the sin of His disciples and suffered the fruit of their doing. He thus satisfies God and receives them into His heaven. No pundit or idol can be of use to you as they are all sinful and helpless. Do not neglect to listen to the words of the Lord Jesus Christ or you will neglect your Saviour, and if so how can you be saved? If a doctor should call out in the market place, "All you sick people come to me, and I will heal you without money and without price", and many careless people do

not go to Him they will suffer the results of their neglect. So the Lord Jesus Christ is the Physician of sick souls and He says, "All you people who are seeking for salvation, who are weary and heavy-laden come unto Me, and I will give you rest". Now, why will you not go to Him? When any man loses his wealth or property he can work and begin again to earn money, but if a man loses his soul he cannot in any measure save it again. The Lord Jesus who once became humble and poor, and lived for a time in this world, is now seated on the throne in heaven. At the end of the world He will come again, that He may receive all His righteous ones and gather them into heaven, that they may be with Him forever. But He will be the judge of the unrighteous and will note every evil thing that they have knowingly done, and will send them to a place that He has prepared for His enemies. In the Bible it is written that the fearful and unbelievers and idolaters shall not be able to enter through the gates of the holy city. It also says that outside there shall be dogs and sorcerers, whoremongers and murderers, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. God does not wish that any should perish, but that all should come to Him and live.

Dear friends, while there is life there is hope. While you are alive is the time to receive salvation, therefore I beseech you, "Come quickly to the Lord Jesus Christ and become His servants, that through His merits you may have your sins forgiven, and be received into the other world".

Some of the More Sombre
Pictures of Indian Life

Burials

Of the three great events of a person's life, two are universally regarded as occasions for rejoicing or celebration of some kind, and so it is in India where the people are especially fond of "tamashas".

When a child is born there is great rejoicing if it be a man child, and less should it prove to be a girl, but times are changing in this respect as in others, for the women there are now proving their worth in many ways, and so are rising in public esteem.

Marriage ceremonies and celebrations often last for many days and the parents are required to be so generous at that time that they may be left with heavy debts that they will find hard to discharge. After the excitement—the depression!

Again, the matter of disposing of the dead is a serious one in India where many of the people are poor. Cremation is practised by the Hindus. They do not use coffins, but the body is wrapped in a sheet and carried on a bier. The sheet is supposed to become the property of the carriers, who are usually of the sweeper caste. The poorer people hold the ceremony at prescribed places, usually near running water, using a modest pile of logs. For the richer

there is a crematorium where the cremation can be performed with due swiftness and decorum. I have never attended one of the latter, but have often seen the burning pyre around which the relatives sit, sometimes until late in the night, waiting for the whole to be consumed.

Owing to the great heat of the sun, the body is usually cremated on the very day the death occurs, or at latest one day after. It is important that the eldest son or nearest male relative be present to crush in the skull as the burning procedes, in order to free the spirit from the body of flesh. This is done with a long pole.

Once a poor old Hindu died suddenly on our compound and his caste people gathered for the funeral. His body was carefully wrapped up and placed on a bier, and was carried by several men, while the mourners followed in procession chanting. Every few yards the cortege stopped and the chanting grew louder, and thus they did honor to the one who had passed away to the great beyond.

Another funeral took place in our station of a young princess who had died from the effects of burns received while playing with fireworks. Everything possible was done for her, but at last she had to be carried away for the cremation. The procession went through the city streets the body being supported upright on a very handsome bier, and the streets were lined with spectators. I was told that this time the timber used was sandalwood, that could shed its fragrance far and near, and the fire was fed with ghee and other combustibles. Thus due honor was paid her according to her rank, and her early demise was truly mourned.

Another princess who died in a distant land was cremated there and her ashes were brought to India to be strewn in one of the sacred rivers.

Many deaths take place on the shores of the sacred river Ganges where the sick are taken, and, the bodies being cremated there, the ashes are then thrown into the river, where formerly dead bodies used to be cast.

Cremation is considered a good method of disposing of the dead in India as the population is so dense and the deaths correspondingly many.

The Mohammedans bury their dead as do the Christians, and there are cemeteries here and there that are set apart for use by both. The Mohammedans have a custom of setting up shrines for their so-called saints by the wayside, accessible to all, and there the adherents of that faith meet once a week or so to do honour to the departed. The tombs are kept white with lime and are often adorned with green muslin and garlands of flowers. The mausoleums erected in India for some of the Mohammedan rulers are noted for their great beauty, such as the Taj Mahal in Agra where the Emperior Shah Jehan is laid beside the body of his beautiful wife Mumtaj Mahal. Again in South India there is a mausoleum in a garden sacred to the memory of Hyder Ali and his son Tippu Sultan, two Mohammedans who carved out a large empire at the expense of their Hindu neighbours. Their pomp and wealth have departed, but their resting place is still preserved, and their memory kept green by those who admired their achievements.

The Parsees have the most curious of all methods of disposing of their dead, viz.; by exposing the bodies on Towers of Silence leaving them there to be the prey of the fowls of the air. The most noted towers are those of Malabar Hill in Bombay, but as the Parsees are spreading over India there are smaller ones erected here and there. It seems to be an old

custom and perhaps it is not quite approved by some of the younger members of the sect.

The Christian method of burial is the same as in other lands, a six-foot plot of earth and a beautiful ritual, which is a comfort to those who listen to the words of the burial service, "I am the resurrection and the life" . . . "In my Father's house there are many mansions" etc.

We have some of the honored ones of the earth laid to rest in our little cemetery, the beautiful service—a volley from the firing squad, the last post and reveille sounded and the coffin, which had been draped with the Union Jack, lowered into the grave to remain there "Until the day dawn and the shadows flee away". The flowers soon fade but the memory of the good is long lasting.

I once attended a rather weird funeral service at a hill station in India. An English lady had brought an Indian Christian boy to the hills as her servant, and one night he took ill suddenly and died. As the boy had no relatives and was far from his former town, it was thought best for him to be buried there. The magistrate of the town was a Hindu and seemed at a loss to know what to do, as he said that he couldn't get anyone to handle the body as the boy was a Christian. Fortunately there was a Christian Boys' School near by, and on applying there the needed help was forthcoming. A grave was dug in a little Christian cemetery situated in a secluded spot between the hills. There a little company of us, who were acquainted with the lady, waited for the funeral cortege to appear. It was late in coming and darkness had set in before the procession arrived, being lighted by the lamp from the front of the Chaplain's bicycle, with the boys carrying the bier on which the body lay neatly

wrapped. Then it was found that the bamboo bier was too wide to allow it to be lowered into the grave, and, by the poor light, the padre sawed each of the cross pieces until they were the required width. Then putting on his surplice he read the words of the burial service with all due solemnity and decorum. No doubt all of those who stood around the grave in the darkness were impressed with the scene and with the solemn words heard.

The Eyesight and Blindness

Everyone knows what a precious possession the eyes are and what a calamity it is to lose one's sight. The danger of blindness is a very real one in India, as shown by the number of blind one sees there, both among the old and the young. Much of this trouble is owing to the insanitary conditions under which the poorer classes live, and the habit of doing their cooking in small darkened rooms, whose only outlet for the smoke is through a small window high up in the wall. This, and the lack of light in those homes cause eye strain, and then a disease may attack which is virulent enough to blot out the sight of the eyes. Many children, too, rove about unwashed, with eyes pestered with flies and inflamed through neglect. The parents have a habit of applying some black substance to the eyelids of the children, and whether this is good for them or not, who can say, at least it adds to their sorry appearance.

Then the glare of the sun is often too strong for the eyes to endure. We often speak of getting "a touch of the sun" at which time the head and eyes ache and the brain seems to be on fire. This necessitates a rest in a darkened room with cooling lotions being applied, and we soon learn to take extra precautions against this by wearing dark glasses when we emerge into the sunlight, and to protect the head with sunshades. No one can afford to be careless about the sun in India.

One of our Christian Bible women used to say that she was reading the Old Testament

every day in order to finish it before she lost her sight.

Many seem to develop cataract which causes blindness, but now the poorest among the people have begun to realize that something can be done for them if they can only reach a doctor—an army one, or a missionary of which there are too few. One such approached an army medical surgeon and was invited to his office. There this Britisher removed the two cataracts and gave him blinkers to wear temporarily, and after sending to Bombay for the glasses suited to his eyes, gave them to him without charge.

One day when the old man was near the house wearing the new glasses we noticed that the ticket (green on one side and white on the other) was still attached to them, dangling over his nose. On our asking him why he hadn't taken it off he said with a seraphic smile "The doctor Sahib told me to leave it on". Of course we told him that he had misunderstood the doctor, whose Hindi was probably defective.

Who can say that the doctor hadn't shown a remarkable kindness toward this poor old Hindu! This is only one of many such instances that have come to our notice, and we feel that the foreign doctors are really doing good work that binds the two races together in ties of love and respect.

For long years our mission kept open a boarding school for the blind women of our district where they were cared for, and were taught to read by means of the Braille system. These became Christians, and some of them could be used as Biblewomen to tell the story of salvation to others.

Once there was a young lady student in our school, an orphan, with good eyes who had a

difficult decision to make. In another station there was a young blind catechist or preacher whose face had been sadly marred by the small-pox that had deprived him of his sight, and so was not beautiful to look upon. He was well-liked, however, and useful as a preacher to village audiences, but he needed a wife to be his helper and constant companion. So through the missionary of that station who vouched for his Christian character, he asked her hand in marriage. She was left to make her own decision in the matter, and at last her answer was "yes". So the marriage took place and she left the school for her new home. It seems that the marriage was a success as nothing but praise for her industry and usefulness reached us from her new station.

We were once able to rescue a poor blind woman and send her to our Industrial home for widows to be cared for and taught. She had lived in a town farther north but had been put out of the house by her husband when she had lost her sight. Some kind friends put her on the train and sent her to our station where she had an old father and a married sister with a family, both too poor to support her. So poor Radhi became a blind beggar who sat by the wayside and begged. Our Bible-woman took an interest in her and persuaded her to go to the Widow's Home, and there after some time she asked for baptism. On the evening of the service she was too ill to go to the church, so a number of the congregation went to the home and witnessed the ceremony. Radhi lived only a month or two more, but her last days were peaceful and happy.

A band of the blind and halt used to come to a meeting in a little day-school building once a week, and a more forlorn and destitute set of women could hardly be seen elsewhere in this world. There they learned to sing some of

the hymns with their poor cracked voices, and as they listened to the stories of Jesus' love, tears would often flow from their poor sightless eyes and they would say "That is good to hear". At the close, each received a small donation of "pice" which would keep her for a few days. When the next week came round some new faces would be seen and some others be absent, and on making injuries about these we would learn that in the interval they had passed into the great beyond. One could only hope that they, like poor Lazarus in the parable, had been received into the better land. There are many poor derelicts in India unloved and unwept.

Leprosy

I am sure that very few of those who live in the Western Hemisphere have ever seen a person afflicted with that dread disease leprosy. When I first went to India it was a common sight to see a number of lepers sitting by the wayside begging.

One such place in Indore City where they congregated was a long bridge over which the busy traffic crossed, and where they could be easily seen by the passers-by and their poor cracked voices heard as they asked for alms. The defaced countenances were often disfigured badly, being without noses or ears which caused the hearts of the people to melt, and the coppers that were thrown to them were often picked up by hands without fingers, while the stumps of the poor diseased feet were thrust out for all to see.

Since that time more drastic laws have been enacted banishing these people from the public view and giving the government power to put all indigent lepers into asylums where they can be cared for. Thus here and there in the former British and the Indian states many such asylums have been established and everything possible is done for the poor afflicted people.

Although there is one such at Dhar in Central India not far from my station, I have never visited it, and it wasn't until I took the trip to Ceylon about which I have already written that I had the melancholy opportunity of visiting a large leper settlement. It was one for men under the care of the government of Ceylon. To reach this colony we had to cross over a river that had no bridge over it, and the only means of transport found by us was a

small hollowed-out log used as a boat. The seats were boards placed on the top of it from side to side, and the space below was hardly wide enough to accommodate the feet. Happily the boat was prevented from tipping over by two logs being fastened to the side with a cross piece between them. Thus sitting in these very precarious positions our party was safely rowed to the other side.

There in the office building we found the colony's doctor who very kindly escorted us over the grounds and told us a good deal about the dread disease. We saw the lepers here and there over the spacious settlement enjoying a leisure hour. Some showed hardly any signs of the disease, while others were in a more advanced stage showing the inroads it had made on face and limbs. Some were calmly reading the newspapers in the Reading Room, and, seeing them, one could hardly keep back the tears of pity, while the heart longed for some way to comfort them. We were glad to see that there was a fine protestant church on the grounds complete with pews, an organ, Bibles and hymn books and doubtless those of the Christian faith and others often heard words of comfort and sang hymns that brought cheer to their saddened souls. There was also a Hindu Temple to be seen for the use of those who were accustomed to attend such places.

We didn't see the lepers at work, but learned that they did a good deal of farming, and that there was a workshop where much work was done which produced articles used by the inmates. Everything had a clean appearance, and nowhere was there anything repugnant to be seen, with the exception of diseased faces and limbs. The doctor had a theory that leprosy was not contagious and to show that he was not afraid of it, he took up one of the maimed hands and rubbed it over his own,

Of course, in that case, there were no open sores that could be seen. He said that he had worked among the lepers for twenty years and so we felt that he could speak with authority.

At the office we were asked to sign the visitor's book, and to add any message that we cared to write.

The doctor took us back across the river on his raft where, sitting under a canopy and on comfortable seats we had a carefree and happy trip. The afternoon was concluded by a tea-drinking at the doctor's house. As we left we could not help but be comforted by the thought that at least the poor sufferers were living in clean and comfortable quarters, and being cared for by all that science could do for them, and that they were not without hope of relief now as they had been in bygone times.

Everyone knows that children born of leprous parents are free from the disease, and that if they are segregated early they may remain immune from it.

Some of these are being cared for in our Mission hostel at Dhar. One such is a little girl named Ruth whose parents come to visit her each week on the lawn of the Mission bungalow. Others are three brothers whose mother lives in the Leper Home. Hers is a 'burnt out' case but her hands and feet are badly mangled. Another of her boys had been left with an uncle when she first entered the Home. One day she went to this near-by village to visit him and found that she wasn't allowed to enter it. This was not because she was a leper but because she had eaten the food of the Christians in the Leper Home. She stayed beneath a tree on the outskirts of the village and her boy ran out to see her. Before he could be taken back into the communal life of the village the uncle had to pay the priest a fee to have him purified.

This dread scourge of the tropics is said to be slowly and steadily giving way to modern drugs and regular treatment, so much so, that the famous Dr. Molesworth predicts that within two generations it may be brought completely under control in his leprous settlements in Malaya.

Sulphone and Sulphetrone have been responsible for hundreds of cures and in remaining cases deteriation has been greatly arrested. It is sad to learn that there have been such cases among Americans and Britishers even. Most people have heard of Mary Reed who, when she was attacked by it, elected to remain in a hill station in India to work among those afflicted as she was. There was also a Canadian Baptist Missionary whom I met often during one summer in his well-days. He now has passed on to the place where there is no more sickness and sorrow.

Pests and Creeping Things

What shall I say about the mosquitoes in India—those disturbers and tormentors of the peace and the health of the people there? They are small in size, but they make up for that by being extra sharp biters, assuring the discomfort of many both day and night—especially of those who have not yet lost the rich blood gained by living in the cooler home lands. The effect of these bites on them and on others is so severe and dangerous, that the mosquito may be considered enemy number one in most parts of India.

On arriving at the seaport of Bombay the trouble with them begins, and we learn that we must now sleep under netting that seems to prevent us from getting all the fresh air we require in that hot port. But woe to the person who does not plan to be protected in this way during the hours of sleep! There, too, we receive letters of welcome to this great land, and along with that we are advised of the necessity of providing ourselves with enough of the netting to be used up country. At Bombay, too, if we haven't done so at Port Said or Aden, we must purchase pith sun-topees and other tropical necessities, and as a consequence of the unusual spending, amusing stories are told of how the finances get very low or quite exhausted during the day or two spent there. This lack, however, can easily be remedied, as there are always agents ready to supply one with any funds required.

We early learn to distinguish the anophales mosquito that is charged with causing the malaria that is so prevalent in India. Hardly anyone there escapes this scourge, and some are pestered with it throughout their whole so-

journ in that land. The malaria so saps one's strength that it also brings other diseases in its train and causes many deaths. Doctors are busy trying to stay its ravages, and the health officials do what they can to exterminate the breeding-places of the mosquitoes, such as stagnant pools, and disinfecting those that remain.

Quinine and Atabrin are the great remedies, and every inducement is given to the people to take them as a preventive measure. In our school at the change of the seasons, we find it an advantage for the pupils to be given some at least twice a week.

The mosquitoes are so small that they often slip through the meshes of the mosquito curtains and thus cause sleepless nights, and so they get much abuse "curses not loud but deep", and the hope of all is that they may be soon gotten-rid-of, like the snakes of Ireland.

Sometimes we get a little respite from them by burning incense in the room where we are sitting or by sprinkling flit or eucalyptus or citronella around, but they always return to the attack and never seem to tire of their warfare.

Another creature that invades the house is the little green lizard, but as this is neither dangerous nor troublesome, it is usually allowed to carry on its work of ridding the walls and ceilings of the moths and insects that are so lively, especially after the lights are turned-on in the evenings. It stalks its prey and when near enough grabs and swallows it whole, wings and all.

It was fun watching a lizard that often peeped at me over the back of the dressing table. It used to be so tame that if it saw a dainty morsel even near my hand it would run over and catch it. If a lizard gets a fright it drops its tail, but that does not seem to inconvenience it, for it grows another before long.

A larger species is the chameleon, but this kind seldom enters the house. It usually stays on bushes or walls where it takes the colour of the background.

An insect feared by the people is the scorpion, which also is a frequent invader of the house, and may be found in any room and even in a book case among the books. It has poison at the end of its tail, and, when it is touched or attacked, it strikes with its tail in such a way that the person struck is conscious of a burning sensation that causes much distress. This is a common trouble in a large school where tearful girls and even women run for the relief that we can give them by applying liquid ammonia, or salt and onion, both of which have proved to give relief. It is not very long before tears are wiped away and smiles break out, showing that the agony of the sting has been subdued.

Wasps, too, think they are entitled to a place in some of our rooms, finding them cooler than the outside world. So we may come across some of their nests hidden under a chair or openly placed on any piece of furniture that furnishes them with a foothold. They are certainly unwelcome visitors and, when interfered with, give one a sting that makes itself felt for many a long day.

Another visitor for which we have no welcome is the centipede. It is supposed to have a hundred feet, as its name implies, and its numerous claws allow it to mount on the ceilings of the rooms from which it likes to drop upon the people below. At the sight of one we immediately plot its destruction, as we have heard that if it gets a hold of human flesh it digs its way in, and becomes so imbedded that the part affected has to be cut out.

All this will show you that the houses in

India are often unscreened and thus are able to admit many of the crawling and flying specimens of insect life of India. We may thus be supposed to live near to nature, and that is true, as life there is spent chiefly in the open air, except during the hottest weather when it is thought prudent to close up the house for a time each day.

Would it seem far-fetched if I were to say, in conclusion, that these small stinging insects are symbols of the smaller trials and difficulties of life, and that they may be overcome and rendered harmless by patience and watchfulness? And these should be united by faith in Him who holds our lives and destinies in His hands and who will guide us to that time of which it is written "There shall be no more curse, for the former things are passed away."

Poisonous Serpents

This sketch is about some of the poisonous serpents of India that often approach too near to be agreeable or safe.

Snakes have been able to take a large toll of life, owing to the prejudice among the Hindus against taking the life of even these venemous creatures, but the practice of wearing shoes or gaiters instead of going barefooted, and of sleeping on cots instead of on the ground, has lately been a help toward the saving of many lives.

Let me tell you how some of these unwelcome guests invaded our home and thus lost their lives without harm to ourselves. Once when the two central rooms of our bungalow were emptied of their furniture to allow the housecleaners to hold sway over the walls and ceiling (which in India are usually colored a pale yellow or green, and can thus be made attractive by hanging drapes and using cushions of the same shade), a number of workmen returning after their noon rest saw a long snake glide over the threshold of the open door and enter the frontroom. Soon the cry of "snake, snake" brought us to the scene and by that time the cobra had reached the second room and had taken refuge in a corner of it, ready to make a stand against any foe.

Standing away a few yards from it, we couldn't help being fascinated with the sight. The head was raised about two feet from the ground, while the lower part of the body was gracefully coiled below. Viewing the onlookers it turned its head, with its distended hood, this way and that, while its forked tongue was extended accompanied by a loud hissing noise. It looked ready to spring upon anyone bold

enough to go near it, which made us hesitate and ponder how best it could be dispatched. However a long pole was brought and one of the men at last found a chance to strike at its head, and when the head was brought down it was an easy prey This cobra was certainly the longest I have ever seen except in the hands of professional snake charmers who carry them about in baskets.

Another mild excitement was caused by the visit of a karait to a small room adjoining a large bedroom. When I was in the act of depositing a garment on a chair there a small but very poisonous serpent rose up from the chair-seat almost touching the hand near it. An exit was quickly made in order to get help of some kind. Our night watchman came along with his club and a friend brought an iron rod with which to kill the intruder. But on our arrival at the room, what was our surprise that, search as we might, we could find no trace of the culprit. Indeed it was even hinted that my eyes might have deceived me, but nothing was said that could convince me that its presence there hadn't been a reality, and I was loath to give up the search, and allow it to rove at will through the rooms. Our brave (?) nightwatchman said he knew how it could be found and, after obtaining some mustard (called rye out there) from his little room on the compound he began to walk round and round the house scattering it and uttering some magic words of incantation. Meanwhile a final thrust of the iron rod up and down the back of the wardrobe dislodged the karait, that had been hiding there, and it showed itself on the top where it was in a position to be dispatched. So that night our rest was much more comfortable than it would have been had we not succeeded in finding it.

This same friend had a somewhat similar

experience in another part of the house shortly after. We were called to her room in the early morning to hear that she had awakened after dreaming that a snake was in her room only to find that it was true. She had seen a snake gliding along the floor close to her bed. By this time it had taken refuge in an adjoining room and there we found it vainly trying to creep under a low article of furniture, being hindered by a huge lump in its body, it having, doubtless, swallowed a toad. It was thus caught and killed by us without other help.

Sometimes snakes find remarkable hiding places. One evening, on passing through the sitting room, I noticed that a cushion on one of the chairs had fallen down over the seat. Upon casually lifting it to put it back in position I saw a karait snugly coiled on the chair. It was a startling sight, but a few nervous strokes of a cane put it also out of danger.

One other incident I will relate that also ended happily for us. Driving to a distant school building where a prize-giving was to take place I was in the two-wheeled covered shigram in use at that time, when a karait was discovered coiled up under the cushion of the seat, on the other end of which I had been sitting for about an hour. Happily when it was seen the door of the shigram was open and a hasty exit was made, and soon the serpent was lying dead on the roadside.

None of these incidents I have related have had any serious results, but unfortunately this does not always happen, for time and again one and another of the Christian community have met with sudden deaths from snake bite. I think of two families that each lost a lad who had been attending our school and of the sorrow that reigned in those homes after the loved ones were smitten.

Many precautions are prescribed to meet this

menace and so many lives have been saved by taking those measures in time. A friend of ours tells how he was bitten on the leg by a poisonous snake and how he quickly slashed the spot with his razor letting the blood flow out freely. The resulting scar he calls his Victoria Cross. Another friend tells how she froze to immobility when a long snake passed over her lower limbs. This doubtless, saved her life as it is only when a snake is shaken off and interfered with that it strikes and forces its venom into the blood. Another lady tells how she found a cobra coiled up one morning under the pillow on which she had been sleeping all night. That was a well-behaved snake surely that enjoyed its warm snug cosy quarters too well to be venomous that night, but the lady must have been haunted by the narrow escape she had passed through.

The travelling jugglers and snake charmers of India usually carry a cobra or a python with them to demonstrate the power they have over these creatures. They handle them freely and in the case of the cobras say that they can do so without harm to themselves in any way. On being challenged one day by a doubter who had suspected that the sting and poison of the cobra had been extracted, the juggler said "Bring me a hen and I will soon show you that the cobra is dangerous." The hen was brought and, on the snake attacking it, the fowl soon lay dead.

Some of the pythons are very large and strong and have the habit of winding themselves around their victims and pressing them until death takes place. These snake charmers allow them to wind themselves around the body, but when they speak to them they obey the voice and loosen their hold.

Certainly snakes are susceptible to music. This was noted by one of our friends who,

while playing the piano, noticed a small karait sitting on a table near by swaying backwards and forwards to the music. They are very fond of milk also and one day the approach of a snake to a group of us was stopped by one of our number rising quietly and depositing a saucer of milk in its path while the rest of us were enjoined to remain quite still. This took place in our sitting room, and we hardly realized at first the reason of the injunction, until we saw the snake busily drinking the milk set down for it.

The people who believe in these reptiles having souls often visit the holes where the snakes live and deposit there their offerings of milk and rice in order, I suppose, to propitiate them and thus to ensure their own safety. So not until the people realize that it is not a sin to take the lives of these enemies of mankind can we expect the land to be rid of this scourge.

One has to be specially watchful during the rainy season when their holes become filled with water and they are thus forced to come out in the open. Their appearance is more frequent in the jungles and open country, of course, but it is common sense never to walk about in the dark even in the rooms of the house, owing to these and other enemies.

One day a large poisonous animal of the lizard class commonly called a Bish-cobra, and which is more feared by the Indian than the cobra itself, entered our dining room and, on being discovered, it crept into a sunshade that was in a corner of the room. You can imagine that no thought of the value of the umbrella entered our minds at that time, as we kept slashing it with our clubs until it was in tatters, thus making sure of the death of the intruder. That was my one experience of this dreaded beast.

Our part of India was not much given to

openly advocating temperance principles although these are greatly needed for both Europeans and Indians alike; but one day at our railway station I saw a large notice board on the wall bearing the words "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, at the end it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. Have you been stung?" This was an astonishing sign board but it was not permitted to give its message to the passersby for very long, for on my next visit to the station its place was vacant. Those words imply that as we would flee from a serpent we should also flee from all forms of evil that lie in wait to harm us.

The Horse

As the motor cars have apparently come to stay, unless they should be displaced by some other vehicle more mechanized and with greater speed, we can now only pay tribute to the memory of the flesh-and-blood animals that served us so faithfully during the "horse-and-buggy" days that are almost past. Those good friends of humanity certainly deserve a word of praise before they pass out of our memory, as they shared with us the discomforts of heat and cold, the dangers of the roads from wild beasts or accidents, the darkness of the night rides when their instincts alone must be relied upon for safety, and when work was often required of them beyond their capacity to endure.

I can remember the time when in the great city of Bombay the trams were drawn by horses whose heads had to be protected during the great heat with white pith topees tied over their necks to save them from sunstroke, and that this device did not always succeed.

So in this memoir I shall mention a few that I have known and loved. Our last steed was called 'Don" and when not at work he lived in a stable in our back yard, and when out at work he drew a clumsy-covered vehicle called a tonga, and in the evenings a light two-wheeled cart if we went for an outing. Don was good to look at, but was not a good-natured horse, for when we tried to pet him, he would toss up his head and show his teeth, and if we offered him a carrot or a piece of bread he snapped at it so quickly that the giver would have to be quick to avoid the bite that he might give you. So Don was chiefly beloved for his speed and his willingness to go wher-

ever he was required. His life was not a strenuous one and he was well supplied with grain and hay and all the care that the syce could give him. He was an impatient horse if kept waiting too long and once he accomplished the feat of turning a somersault backwards in his harness when he was urged by the reins to go forward. As he was extricated with some difficulty from his awkward situation at that time, he didn't try that manoeuvre again.

One day it was reported that Don wouldn't eat his food and was acting in a strange manner. On seeing him I noticed that he was gnawing his left front hoof with his teeth and seemed to be mad. A veterinary from the adjoining Indian state was called in and he pronounced the horse to be quite mad and incurable, and so must be shot. The veterinary drove back to the city and returned in due time with two men who had guns with them. I questioned him once more asking if there was no hope and his answer was an emphatic "No", and so we left Don to his fate. Soon two shots rang out which we tried not to hear by covering our ears with our hands. On the contrary, I afterwards learned that some of the pupils had mounted the roof-top to see if their vision could overreach the line of outhouses between them and the back yard. Thus our Don died and was soon lifted on to a municipal cart and taken away for burial or cremation. Our eyes followed his remains with real regret.

Such mysterious events as this often happen in India, that are put down to snake bite, as was the case of a cow that we owned which, after swinging its body round once or twice, fell dead. An inmate of our home used to bemoan the fact that all the animals that she had ever cared for in India had died. I knew personally of an Arab horse and two dogs,

the former dying of what seemed to be nose-bleed just after she had arrived back from a drive.

There was another horse in our station that went mad and had to be shot, and, as the horse's master had received some of the foam from its mouth on his hand, both he and his wife underwent the painful Pasteur treatment for the prevention of Hydrophobia.

Here's another word about another horse of mine that didn't meet such a fate. Its name in Hindi meaning "spotted" was like enough to the words "bad luck" as to have that name given to it as a nickname. It had been a polo pony, and its habit of stopping abruptly and of starting abruptly almost caused a catastrophe at times. He was very fond of going to church and sometimes got out of control when we tried to make him pass a corner of the street that led to that building. He would at such times, take matters into his own hands, and land us at the door where a school was in progress during week days. Only once in his wild flights did he succeed in spilling the occupants of the carriage and cause it slight damage. In his old age he settled down and did honourable service for a good many years by driving some mission workers to their places of labour.

There are still in our adjoining city some cavalry troops, as well as the infantry and artillery stationed there, and we have occasionally witnessed displays of horsemanship given by the Indian troops such as high jumping and tent pegging. But one's mind goes back to the times of yore when the disciplined cavalry horses used to exhibit their more fancy manoeuvres such as musical rides, the horses prancing so nicely in time to the music of the band. And then we used to hold our breath as the dash past took place, the horses

being brought to a dead stop in their seemingly mad race just a few yards from the spectators. There is something very interesting about seeing these horses ridden by their uniformed officers marching along so proudly as if they knew they were being admired. The chief display of horsemanship seen of late in our city is when the students of the Chiefs' College go out for their morning ride.

There are not many complimentary things said about the horse in the Bible though mention is made of its strength, and its neck being clothed with thunder. It is described as a headstrong animal whose mouth must be kept in with bit and bridle and we are enjoined not to be like it. Many horses and chariots were collected together in Jerusalem by King Solomon who brought them from Egypt. In one passage it was said that he had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots (the number of the latter being fourteen hundred) and twelve thousand horsemen. The king's dependence on these for security seems to mark one phase of his defection from God, who warned him that no king is saved by the multitude of an host, and that a horse is a vain thing for safety. All of which tends to teach us that we should not trust in armaments alone, but in the Lord God of Hosts who is our help and our shield.

POEMS

A Sabbath by the Sea

My love of the sea, the deep blue sea,
Found a rich satisfaction recently,
When a drive to a shore-line, easy to reach,
Brought us near to a favourite sandy beach.

There seated on rocks above the bright sand
In companionable mood, with friends at hand,
We rested and spent several hours serene
In watching this most beauteous scene.

Here the broad expanse of the deep blue sea
Stretches out its surface unceasingly,
To wash the shores of some distant land,
Whose occupants bask on its golden strand.

A few yards distant we see a line
Where the rocky reef and the sea combine
To splash up a surface of white sea foam,
That charms the eyes that over it roam.

Then nearer the shore the breakers roll in
Continually with there boom and din,
In which some swimmers take much delight
While frolicking through its recurrent flight.

On the terrace above of majestic size
Is a surf-club's ambitious enterprise,
Whose windows give guests such a spacious
view
Of the mighty ocean, in all its moods new.

Then when the shadows of evening fall
An ingenious factor takes charge of all,
With coloured lights that illumine the place
Creating a scene full of charm and grace.

How happy the lot of one should be
To reside for a season beside the sea,
To think of God's greatness and His design
Of renewing our hearts by His love divine!

Christ's Farewell to His Disciples

When Christ's life neared its end below
He told 'the twelve' that He must go
Back to His home, but let them know
That He would come again.

He would for them a place prepare
Amid the heavenly mansions fair,
A home for them with Him to share,
And He would come again.

He told them of the mystic tie
That, through their love, would keep them nigh
Close partners in a trustship high,
And He would come again.

Just as the Father lives in me
And I in Him, we live in thee,
As branches in a living tree,
And He would come again.

And in the meantime He would send
The Holy Spirit to attend
And be a Comforter and Friend,
Till He would come again.

This Holy Spirit would them guide
Into all truth, with them reside,
And help them whatsoe'er betide,
And He would come again.

Once more He asks them not to fear
For, though unseen, He'd still be near,
In times of trial them to cheer,
And He would come again.

Fellowship

How a child delights to show her toys,
To share with a friend her dearest joys,
It seems to heighten the pleasures of each
To have such a friend within her reach.

When a dear one accepts another's gift
Their friendship receives a sweet uplift,
While a mutual pleasure floods their hearts
And a deeper joy it to them imparts.

Thus Christ with His heavenly riches fair
Yearns ever with us His gifts to share,
Seeking the understanding heart
That He love and joy to it impart.

How patiently the Saviour taught
His weak disciples, until they caught
The tenor of His service true
And longed to weave it in their lives too!

On the eve of His sad betrayal He
To His Father in heaven breathed this plea:
That they might be with Him forever there
To see His glory and in it share.

'Tis said that Christ's sacrifice complete
Will yield to Him satisfaction meet,
When all who love Him will see Him crowned
And bask in His glory the throne around.

But here we must bear the cross, we're told,
And share in His labours manifold,
For lowly service in His employ
Will yield even here a wealth of joy.

We, too, shall be satisfied, we know,
When into His likeness we shall grow,
And live with Him in His Father's home,
From which we shall never, never roam.

God's Compassion

'Tis said of God before Christ came
Into this world of sin and shame
That He knew well our human frame.

He knew that we were simply dust,
Full of soul's weakness and distrust,
And pitied as a father must.

And then Christ came with love to man
According to God's gracious plan,
Made e'en before the world began.

He came to bear our sin and shame,
To raise the fallen, heal the lame,
And save through love and not through blame.

He who was wholly pure within
Here gave Himself to die for sin,
To be a ransom souls to win.

Because He died for the unjust
He saves all those who on Him trust,
That they may now be counted just.

So now to God our Father we
Through Him may reconciled be,
And live with Him eternally.

Good Friday and Easter

That was the darkest day on earth
  The day that Jesus died,
But it brought one of wondrous worth—
  The blessed Eastertide.

Christ came on mission serious,
  All pure of heart within,
To pour His lifeblood out for us
  As punishment for sin.

His death revealed the depth so dire
  Of human guilt and shame,
That it such remedy require
  For Him man to reclaim.

It showed the heinousness of sin
  For Christ to bear the cross,
To die on Calvary to win
  Man from sin's bitter loss.

His life He willingly laid down
That we through Him might know
That all sin's penalty was paid,
Because He loved us so.

The cross, a symbol of Christ's love,
May be our comfort here,
Our joy in endless years above,
Our glory and our cheer.

The third day sees the Christ arise
Triumphant o'er the grave,
Victorious over death's strong ties,
Replete with power to save.

This glorious fact we celebrate
Each year at Eastertide,
When nature, too, shows powers great
To give joys that abide.

For as the sun from clods of earth
Brings forth the lilies fair,
The Sun of righteousness gives birth
To heavenly beauties rare.

Christ can our deadened souls revive
Beneath His Spirit's rays,
And grant new life that will survive
To His eternal praise.

Christ longs to give abundant life,
That all the virtues true
May overcome all sin and strife,
And truly life renew.

One day the Church, all glorious,
Shall in Christ's presence stand,
O'er sin and death victorious,
In fair Emmanuel's land.

He Shall Strengthen Thine Heart

Ps. 27: 40

The heart may be the seat of power
  Or of discouragement,
Receiving God's high purpose dower
  Or harbouring low intent.

We all have hardships to endure,
  Temptations, too, to face,
But we may have a Helper sure
  And rich supplies of grace.

How wonderful that we may claim
  God's gifts abundantly,
Sufficient to achieve our aim
  To live triumphantly!

Faint hearts that cannot face the foe,
  And own no helper near,
Oft yield to what can yield but woe
  And disappointment drear.

The Master says, 'Be strong, fear not'
  Let not your courage wane,
Strength for the common daily lot
  I'll give and thee sustain.

God's children have a heritage
  E'en here on earth to win—
Triumphant war o'er sin to wage
  And Christlike hearts within.

Heaven

There is a home above
Beyond the starry skies,
A land of peace and love,
Unseen by mortal eyes.

This we shall see at last
By promises made sure,
A home when life is past
Eternally secure.

In that celestial clime
Shall live in sweet accord
And joyousness sublime
All those who love the Lord.

In heavenly mansions fair
Where Christ himself doth reign
We shall forever there
A fuller life attain.

Time in Christ's school bespent
Shall find us learners still,
With earnest hearts intent
To do the Master's will.

There will be much to learn
To strive for and maintain,
That we high truths discern
And deeper life obtain.

Frustrations found on earth
Shall there all disappear,
New yearnings come to birth
That give us boundless cheer.

Who can this life describe?
No words can it record,
To Christ must we ascribe
Its joys and rich reward.

King George VI

He walked with death and had no fear,
Was spoken of our sovereign dear,
Who recently received the call
That comes, at length, to one and all.

In sleep his spirit passed away
To heavenly realms of endless day,
To greet the eternal morn so fair,
And be with Christ forever there.

We joy that all his weakness past
He has obtained full life at last,
His earthly cares all laid aside
He shall in peace and rest abide.

Full well he bore the strain and stress
Of duties that might well oppress,
Performed them with a kingly grace
Appropriate to time and place.

We sorrow for his loved ones, left
Without his presence, and bereft
Of ministries that cheer their hearts
And fellowship that love imparts.

All honour to his gracious queen
For her most noble Christian mien
Throughout the sad bereavement hours,
When sorrow wrung her heart and ours!

The youthful queen must now assume
The honours and the cares, that loom
Tremendous, though from hearts of gold
Her people's prayers will her uphold.

(Written March, 1952)

Our Home Above

We've a journey to take to a distant shore
Where Christ our Saviour has gone before,
Where friends are gathering one by one,
In that blest realm when life is done.

They tell us it has a golden strand
Aglow with the light of Emmanuel's land,
And its beauties no human mind can scale
Until heaven's glory shall it unveil.

The river of water of life is there
And crystal fountains clear and fair,
All tears shall there be wiped away,
And ne'er a sorrow shall in it stay.

Its dwellers have all pure robes of white
Spotless, agleam with a golden light,
Their homes are the heavenly mansions fair
Which Christ has prepared for loved ones there.

When we reach that land we shall surely know
So much that is hidden from us below,
And its greatest wonder shall surely be
That we've been given those realms to see.

Its Head and Glory is Christ the Lord,
Exalted high, by all adored,
Whose presence fills with awe and love
As is known alone in the courts above.

Thus from all sorrow and earth-stains free
We holy and gladsome shall ever be,
Joyous in doing the Master's will
And in learning from Him heaven's higher skill.

All this is the gift of the Saviour, who
Bore all our sins and our sorrows, too,
That He redeem us, and to each give
A place in His kingdom with Him to live.

Mission Workers

True faith in God is a factor real
That helps men heed the Christ's appeal
For work that needs a fervent zeal.

It helps them brave the stormy deep
Their covenant with Christ to keep
To seek for some of His lost sheep.

It leads them to some foreign land,
On needy spots to take their stand
To speak for Christ at His command.

It takes them where false creeds deprave,
Where superstitions still enslave,
And sink the mind in errors grave.

There many kneel to idols dumb,
And lifeless creeds the hearts benumb,
And hopeless lives to death succumb.

It nerves the tongue to learn the speech
That brings them into helpful reach
With people whom they long to teach.

It helps them spread the joyful sound,
To make God's love through praise resound,
While seeing that good deeds abound.

They teach the little children there,
Help many saddened hearts to bear
And cast on Christ their every care.

The sick and suffering find relief,
The sad in heart lose pain and grief,
Through this new gladsome soul's belief.

But best of all they see and know
Believers in Christ's image grow,
And by their lives the true faith show.

This makes them glad that they were sent,
That to this work their lives were lent,
Because with Christ their years were spent.

My Call

I had a call to service in
  The vineyard of the Lord,
A call that came the heart within
  As loud as spoken word.

There was a service at the church
  Attended by its youth,
Who weekly met in earnest search
  For higher gleams of truth.

That special night our thoughts were led
  To Christ, the world's great need,
To be well-proved by items read
  On which we had agreed.

My share had been a poem that could
  Make known by strong appeal
The need of India's womanhood,
  And make their wants seem real.

It told of how an ancient dame
  When first she heard the news
Of how the Lord from heaven came
  To bless and save Hindoos;

Had said, while tears streamed from her eyes,
  Oh, why, oh why, have you
Not come before to heal our sighs
  And give us comfort true?

I've spent my life in fruitless round
  Of temple and of shrine
I've gone on pilgrimage and found
  No cheer for soul of mine.

And now my hair has turned quite grey,
  My heart is weak and sore,
Oh blessed comforter, please say
  Why you've not come before?

Such words, I read, and soon I heard
  The Master's voice me say,
I'm sending *you* to give that word
  Please do not say Me nay.

The struggle lasted through the night
  Till doubts were stayed at length,
With certainty that Christ's own might
  Would be my Guide and Strength.

The Servants

Mark 13: 34-37

Christ represents the son of man as one
  Who, ere a distant journey was begun,
Assigned the work each servant there should do
  And authorized its execution, too.

He warned the porter that he ever be
Upon the watch for his return, lest he
Be found unready, should he come at night,
Cockcrowing, evening or by morning light.

And his command to each was 'Watch and pray',
Take heed lest some of you be turned away,
Neglect the work the master bids you do,
And miss the rich rewards he proffers you.

We are the servants bound to Christ for life,
To do His will through sunshine or through strife,
Advance His interests, true and loyal be
Ones worthy of a Master such as He.

This Christ we know will surely come again,
Assert His rightful sovereignty and reign,
And ours the task to watch and labour now
For soon, as Judge, we shall before Him bow.

The Walls of Jerusalem

The Jews had a task before them
On return from exile long,
To build the walls of Jerusalem,
In face of enemies strong.

They make their prayers to Israel's God
And watches, too, are laid,
To send alarum all abroad,
Should quick attacks be made.

Upon the walls the workers stand
All close to one another,
Holding a weapon in one hand,
While working with the other.

Each tribal unit has a share
In this vast enterprise,
And even women labour there
To fill some gap likewise.

And while they struggle daringly,
With faith and strong endeavour,
Their foes are watching warily
To find some weak spot ever.

But unity brings them success
For it makes prospects brighter,
Encouragements relieve distress
And make all burdens lighter.

Thus one day sees the work complete,
All wearied minds at rest,
And hearts with thankfulness replete.
Because their work God blessed.

We, too, have foes who secretly
Spy out our weakened spots,
And try with ardour ceaselessly
To dominate our lots.

The lesson is that unity
And faith in God prevail,
When foes our life's security
With evil plots assail.

The Godly Man

Ps. 1: 3, 92; 12-14

The godly man is like a tree,
(The Psalmist teaches you and me)
A tree that by a river grows,
And whose life rich abundance shows.

Its fruit in season never fails,
The heavenly dew for it avails,
Its roots, too, seek the moistened earth
And rescue it from blight and dearth.

Its beauteous form with leaves is spread
When others oft their leaves have shed,
It prospers thus by day and night
Because it has God's oversight.

Again the righteous he compares
Unto a palm, which grows and shares
A place within the courts of God,
Where it can spread its leaves abroad.

Or like the cedar tree it may,
Like those of Lebanon, display
A wondrous growth that makes one know
It has a privileged place to grow.

It brings forth fruit in its old age,
Enjoys a wondrous heritage,
Both flourishing and fat remains
Until life's limit it attains.

The hearts imbued with godly fear
Have many privileges here,
They share God's living streams serene,
And feed on heavenly pastures green.

Oh may we all the psalmist heed,
On God's own word our spirits feed,
And prove to all earth's hungry horde
It profits much to serve the Lord!

Some Italian Cities Visited

Florence the Beautiful

A large water colour sketch of Florence on the Arno that I possess is doubtless the scene that Elizabeth Barrett Browning describes in her poem the 'Casa Guidi Windows'. When I was in Florence, though I didn't seek out her house at No. 9 Piazza San Felice where she lived with her husband Robert Browning, her words show that she must have lived in the vicinity of this block of buildings, for here the River Arno washes the feet of the houses on its banks, and these have numerous windows and terraces that almost overhang the water.

She wrote as follows:

I can but muse upon this shore
Of golden Arno, as it shoots away
Through Florence' heart beneath her bridges four,
And strikes on palace walls on either side,
And fronts the cornice out in glittering rows,
With doors and windows quaintly multiplied,
And terrace sweeps, and gazers upon all,
By whom if flower or kerchief were thrown out
From any lattice there, the same would fall
Into the river underneath, no doubt,
It runs so close and fast 'twixt wall and wall.

Yes, in the part of the river shown in this picture the Arno bathes the foundations of a long pile of buildings four or five storeys high. It is a part of the city easily discerned, for at other portions of its flow there are high masonry embankments with wide promenades along its shore for the convenience of the people and for easy access to the bridges that span the wave.

Florence is an inland city of Italy and the River Arno, on its way to the Mediterranean, passes through another city that I was privi-

leged to visit, that of Pisa. That is the place where the famous Leaning Tower still leans in its threatening manner near the Cathedral and Baptistery, both of which are famous in their different ways.

In Florence there are six bridges over the river, the two at the east and west being suspension bridges. Of the others the most famous is the Ponte Vecchio which has shops on either side kept chiefly by jewellers. In the centre three open arches allow visitors to gaze upon the whole stretch of the river and to see the water below flowing rapidly on its way. Over the shops on this bridge is the long passageway that connects the Uffizi Art Gallery to that of the Pitti Gallery on the opposite side of the river. This passageway has been cut through several houses there to reach that large building. It has numerous windows in it and some pictures hang on its walls.

These galleries or museums contain a wonderful collection of art treasures comprising pictures, statues, bas-reliefs, busts, sarcophagi, drawings, portraits, gems, precious stones and many other things. Those in the Uffizi are displayed in different rooms showing different schools such as Tuscan, Dutch, Flemish, German, French and Italian. Many of the halls, too, are named after celebrated artists as the halls of Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo, Van der Goes and of Ruben. One can examine the contents of these rooms without a guide as each statue or picture is clearly labelled with the name of the subject and artist. There are guide books too, that may be bought.

We are told not to miss visiting the tribune—the octagonal room which contains the choicest works of the best masters, with five masterpieces of sculpture and many paintings.

The fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth

centuries seem to have produced the most noted artists, such as Leonardo da Vinci and Botticelli in the 15th: Raphael, Michael Angelo, Fra Bartolomeo, Cellini, Rubens and Van Dyke in the 16th; Guido Reni, Murillo and Velasquez in the 17th.

The Uffizi Gallery is in the second story of a large building and is reached by a staircase of 128 steps. A lift also takes people up for a small fee.

After passing through these rooms one must descend a long flight of stairs to reach the corridor leading to the Pitti Museum and Palace. On arriving there one also finds numerous rooms and many interesting things to see. Near it are the Boboli botanical gardens which are open to visitors only twice a week.

The view of Florence from this high spot on the south shore is a very fine one, but the same magnificent view we were able to obtain later when we took the three mile drive to San Miniato Church and cemetery. The well-laid out terrace before that church called Palazzo Michael Angelo is dominated by a statue of David, and from there the river and city spreads out before one's view making a magnificent scene with its background of hills and mountains.

But let us now, as I did a number of times, pay a visit to the Duomo and its environs. This spot seems to dominate the religious life of the city, as its companion, the Piazza della Signoria, does the civil life of the city and its history.

The cathedral is a magnificent structure 551 feet long and its dome is one of the widest in the world, though not so high as that of St. Peter's in Rome. The exterior, as it is to-day, was only completed in 1887 and is adorned with different-coloured marbles which give it

a very rich appearance. On it are also statues, bas-reliefs and mosaics. The interior is unusually dark and sombre, but its beauty grows upon one, especially when it is lighted up by the bright sunshine streaming through the richly painted glass of the windows.

In our time people have been made acquainted with it through the story of Romolo by George Eliot and her description of the preaching, work and death of Savonarola.

Its bell-tower or campanile, like many in Italy, stands apart from the church. It is called Giotti's tower because it was built by the once-peasant boy, who, having been found herding sheep by the gifted Cimabue, was taken by him as his pupil and in time became the famous architect. Ruskin believed this tower to be the model and mirror of perfect architecture. From the summit which rises 292 feet, and is reached by 414 steps, one can obtain a fine view of the city and surrounding country. The Baptistery also stands apart from the church. It is an octagonal building surmounted by a dome and lantern and is supposed to be erected on the site of an old Roman temple dedicated to Mars. Its three bronze doors are its greatest charm and reward a study.

The Piazza della Signoria is a square with a wide open space which is the very heart of the city's civic life, the meeting place of multitudes on all great civil occasions. From the Tribune the Republican orators delivered their speeches and here Savonarola perished at the stake.

The Palazzo Vecchio with its tower 308 feet high stands at the side of the square. Near the top we were shown a room where Savonarola spent his last night on earth in company with two friars who were to die

with him. This place was commenced by the architect of the Duomo as a residence for the chief magistrates and governing body of the Republic and, although it has been used for other purposes at times, its great hall is still used by the municipality for public assemblies such as concerts and lectures. It was both a palace and a prison for chambers have been found in what was thought to be the solid wall in which were confined Cosimo Vecchio and Fra Girolano, the dauntless Savanarola.

Outside in the square there is a metal plate in the ground marking the spot where Savonarola met death by burning. Some people say that he and his two companions were first executed and their bodies burned afterwards. The ashes were then carried off and thrown into the Arno.

Savonarola, though he was considered a heretic by the ecclesiastic heads of his day is now conceded to be the great man of his age. He so roused the people by his preaching that they repented of their sins and gave up their worldly vanities, which were collected and made a bon-fire of in the public square.

He spent some time in prison as a condemned man and on the morning of his death he was taken to the Tribunal and divested of his priestly decorations. During this ceremony the Bishop took him by the hand saying, "Thus I exclude you from the church militant and triumphant." Savonarola exclaimed "From the church militant thou mayest, but from the triumphant thou canst not—that does not belong to you." The last words from his lips were, "My Saviour, though innocent, willingly died for my sins, and should not I willingly give up this poor body out of love to Him."

His work of reformation was carried on by Martin Luther in Germany who was a youth when Savonarola died.

Near this square the houseof Dante Alighieri is located. He was born in Florence in 1265 A.D., but had an unhappy life there owing partly to an unhappy marriage and also to the political dissensions between the Branchi and Charles of Valois in which he took part. As his side lost, he was forced to leave Florence and roam as an exile for long years. His bitterness of heart led him to write the Divine Comedy which, although over 600 years have passed, is still read and casts its spell on some people's minds. A monument to him was erected in 1865 in the presence of the King in the square or piazza of the church of the Holy Cross. It was the anniversary of his birth. A monument to him which is erected inside the church is severely criticized by some writers, but as he was buried in Ravenna this is only a memorial, not a tomb. Everyone knows the picture of Dante on the bridge meeting the beautiful Beatrice with her two attendants. A deep love for her seems to have grown up in his heart but he learned that she was not for him in this world.

Another famous name connected with Florence is that of Galileo. His house is pointed out on the south side of the city near the Boboli Gardens. His body rests in Santa Groce church—the church of the Holy Cross—which is sometimes called the Westminster Abbey of Italy. We are told that he was made to recant, under great penalties, his theory that the earth moves round the sun. He did so, but when he rose from his knees he turned round to a friend and whispered "It moves for all that". His books on kindred subjects were publicly burned as they were thought to contain dreadful heresies. A tower is named after him, where, it is said, he sat at night to watch the stars and made some of his great discoveries.

He spent his last years in a house near the tower where he was visited by Milton.

Michael Angelo, already mentioned, lived here in a house near the church of the Holy Cross. He was a sculptor, painter and architect, and his patron, Lorenzo de Medici, gave him every opportunity of developing his artistic tastes. So during his long life of 89 years he finished many works of art that are still to be seen throughout Italy. Few of his paintings can equal those he put in the Sistine chapel in Rome and few of his statues can compare with his giant statue of David.

The story of this latter piece of work is often heard, of how out of a spoiled piece of marble he produced his masterpiece. For nearly 400 years this gigantic statue of David stood near the entrance to the Palazzo Vecchio, but in 1873 it was removed to its present site in the academy of fine arts and a copy was erected in its place.

I loved the flower market of Florence so replete with every kind of bloom all so beautiful and so cheap that my travelling companion, a missionary from China, kept our room at the YWCA hostel aglow with flowers. This hostel was on the south side of the river and was probably an old palace, as it had the proportions of one. The second floor was called the first and there were three others above that we were forced to mount without a lift.

We found the Italian girls very lively and noisy. Our breakfast was eaten in the common room, where the tongues of the boarders often waxed fierce and fast. The Superintendent occasionally rang a bell asking for less noise, but, if the sound subsided for a moment, it was soon as loud as ever. There were girls there who had come to Florence to study and

many of them seemed to have very little money. For instance, a young girl at our table always ate her breakfast without butter, and when she was asked if she didn't like butter, her reply was "more money", meaning that butter was beyond her means.

We were pleased to meet other tourists in the evening when we all dined in a separate room.

A Church of England was near at hand which we attended on Sundays. It was quite a small room, narrow and almost filled with pillars. Near by, on the river bank, was an American tearoom which was opened in the afternoons where we could rest and enjoy the "cup that cheers" after our long journey around the city.

I must tell you of a drive we took to the Cascine, called the Hyde Park of Florence. It is a garden or park quite two miles in length which has a casino, a café, a race course and a building where a ball game is played. Military bands play there on Sundays and festivals. At the extreme end we came upon a "find" which was especially interesting to me who had come from India. A monument has been erected there to the deceased Raja of Kolapore. We were told that he was on his way home from England when he died after a short illness at one of the Florence hotels. There on the first day of December, 1870 a group of Indian attendants gathered to prepare the funeral pyre of the dead prince. For the cremation they used large quantities of camphor and odorous ointments. The fire was lit about midnight and continued to burn until near daylight, while a Brahman read prayers and his attendants at times made the groves around resound with their lamentations. His ashes were collected carefully into a golden vase and taken to India. On this monument, afterwards

erected to his memory, a bust of the prince is mounted on a base and is covered with a canopy which rests on columns of bronze elaborately chased. The bust is larger than life size and represents the prince dressed in a gold-embroidered vest and his head covered with a turban of crimson and gold cloth. The Government of Florence became the guardian of it when requested to do so by the government of India.

There is a very interesting society in Florence I would like to mention here. It is the Fraternity of the Misericordia (The League of Pity), the headquarters of which is quite near the Duomo. Although the fraternity is now a rich one, its members still remain faithful to its work of six centuries, viz., to convey the sick to hospitals and the dead to burial. At a sound from the campanile of the Cathedral the day worker hastens to the Piazza to learn his duties from the captain. A half-hour glass is turned to mark the period between the summons and the arrival. There each is provided with a long black dress and a hood that covers the face leaving holes only for the eyes so that he may not be recognized, and then away they go on their errand of mercy. We just missed seeing a funeral procession led by them as it passed into one of the churches, but on our arrival there some of the black-robed brethren were standing at the door in full view of our curious eyes. They certainly have a funereal look, but their work is one of mercy, as they are all willing to help anyone in distress who needs their services.

No one should leave Florence without paying at least one visit to the old Etruscan city of Fiesole which is about five miles away. We took the trip by electric tram passing through interesting parts of Florence, then winding around hills, and seeing new sights at every

turn, views that were rich enough to delight our foreign eyes.

Fiesole has declined in population but has still many points of interest for one to visit. An old Roman theatre has been excavated with semi-circular rows of seats and stage complete, all in the open air, and plays are performed there that draw many tourists. Some of our hostel friends went out there one evening to see a play and they afterwards told us that it was a very romantic experience, sitting under the stars and watching the performance.

We visited the museum which contained a much-battered bronze wolf suckling the twins Romulus and Remus, and many other things such as pottery, bas reliefs, weapons and anything that could be kept from the richer museums. We climbed up a steep road, cobbled with stones to see a church that has some fine pictures, and visited a monastery which is a wonderful pile of buildings erected in 1462. It is now a school and some monks who reside there showed us the small bare cells in which they live and sleep, revealing a true renunciation of the good things of life.

On the way up this hill women were sitting at their doorsteps engaged in weaving straw hats and they offered us some of their finished products for sale. They all seemed cheerful and contented and indeed, the hills and vales in this part of the country form a landscape that is truly interesting to see, and a healthy place, no doubt, in which to live.

In 1944 the retreating Germans blew up five of the bridges of Florence and so smashed the approaches to the Ponte Vecchio that no one had access to it. Now all replacements and repairs have been effected so that the city is once more beautiful, and of great interest.

Venice

I possess two fairly-sized water colour pictures of Venice each of which shows one of the canals for which this city of waterways is famous. One of them depicts the Bridge of Sighs which, high up, crosses the canal between the Ducal Palace and the dark prison house on the right. The bridge is supported by an arch that stretches between the two buildings and has two small windows on the side shown in the picture. The bluish water beneath, with its flecks of white, shows the ripples caused by the passing of a gondola rowed by a standing gondolier.

Such a picture is a well-known one and is representative of the Venice that visitors see.

To see Venice has been the dream of many a person and I was very pleased to have that privilege. I entered it from the Adriatic by steamer from India and the first glimpse the travellers got of it was a dim view as seen through a thick mist, which did not allow the sight to be a very impressive one. As the steamer reached the dock it was invaded by a group of hotelmen who were ready to receive visitors and escort them to their lodgings. A young boy in a smart uniform induced me to accept his help, and soon he and an older guide had put my belongings into a gondola and were taking me to the Marconi Hotel. I soon learned that this was a very convenient place to stay as it was only a few houses away from the Rialto Bridge on the Grand canal, and was within easy walking distance of St. Mark's square—the centre of Venetian life and movements. My friend from China arrived the next morning, and thus two adventurous women were ready with one accord to explore the sights of the great city.

Being down at St. Mark's Square the follow-

ing morning at Thomas Cook & Son's office where we went to invest in some Italian money, we were told to watch the beating out of the noon-hour from the top of the Clock Tower nearby. So just as the noon-hour arrived we saw the two huge figures (painted black and called Moors by the people) begin to strike the bell with their heavy hammers raised alternately until the twelve strokes were finished. This scene takes place every hour and half-hour each day. This tower is over the gateway by which we had entered the square—the end of the roadway leading from the Rialto Bridge. On the first floor of the tower is a large and very beautiful gilt clock-face which marks the hours, minutes, zodiac, date and lunar phases.

On the second floor, in a niche between two doors, there is a figure of the Virgin and the Babe. From the feast of the Ascension to the day of Pentecost, some action is to be seen there each day at the stroke of each hour and half-hour, which we were fortunate enough to be able to see once during our stay. At those times the door to the right opens and three figures representing the Magi come forth preceded by an angel with a trumpet. They all pass before the statue of the Madonna and, after bowing reverently before her, they pass into the other door.

On the third floor front is a Lion of St. Mark and on the very top is the huge bell which is struck, as already mentioned, by the bronze figures with the hammers.

St. Mark's square is the great assembly place for the people of Venice and there many tournaments and spectacles of all kinds are held, also a great fair on Ascension Day. The space is in the form of a trapezium 193 yards in length, 92 yards wide at one end and 67 yards on the inner side. It is surrounded and enclosed on three sides by ancient historical

buildings now called the Royal Palace. On the East is St. Mark's Cathedral and an outlet on the south is a smaller square or Piazzetta which leads to the sea-shore. This has on one side of it the famous Ducal or Doge's Palace called Piazzetta San Marco which is almost on a line with St. Mark's Cathedral.

In the lower storeys of the buildings in the square there are many restaurants that cater to the people who gather there, and for their convenience hundreds of chairs and tables are set out in the open air. One can secure a seat there by investing in any kind of light refreshments, and thus can watch the movements of the people. A band plays there on many occasions.

During the day the pigeons greatly amuse one as they are very tame and many people get snap shots taken with one or more of them on their arms or shoulder. A ration of corn is fed the pigeons each day by the municipality. Three ornamental flag poles stand up in front of St. Mark's Cathedral on which the national colours are displayed on feast days.

Let us now look at the exterior of the Cathedral which is certainly a remarkable building with its rows of arches and its five handsome domes and many spires. It glitters with gold and gorgeous mosaics and columns of different coloured marbles. On the top of the large central arch above the entrance door are four bronze horses that have had an eventful history. It is said that they first belonged to the Arch of Nero in Rome and, after being transported to Constantinople, were brought to Venice. Then they were carried off to Paris by Napoleon Bonaparte and restored to Venice once more in 1815 and placed where they are to-day.

The present Campanile or Bell tower is near-

by. The lower portion is rather plain but it has an ornamental belfry and tower. The old campanile, which stood for ten centuries, fell almost silently one night sending up clouds of dust collected during one thousand years. It is said that no one was hurt by its fall. The new one took almost ten years to be completed but it was at last dedicated on St. Mark's Day in 1912. It is 110 yards in height and has five bells of good calibre. A lift now takes people to the top if they so desire.

In the small square, the Piazzetta, there stands a high column on which is the winged lion of St. Mark. It has its right paw on the top of the open gospel and faces the sea. It is a sign of remembrance and gratitude for the recovery of the body of St. Mark that had been seized by the infidels in Alexandria. St. Mark's body had been brought to Venice in 827 A.D., and a temple erected to his memory. St. Mark had then been proclaimed the patron saint of the city. This statue of the winged lion had also been carried away to Paris by Napoleon in 1797 but was brought back after his downfall and, being in a very mutilated state, had to be repaired. The edge of the Piazzetta is the principal stand for gondolas in Venice and so is a very lively and busy spot. The sunsets as seen from this place are often very beautiful and are one of the sights of this remarkable city built over the sea whose many streets are sea lanes and whose conveyances are gondolas and steamers.

This square was such an interesting spot that we spent a good deal of time there, but my readers would not be satisfied if I didn't say a word more about the two handsome buildings, St. Mark's Cathedral and the Ducal Palace that border it.

It would take a better pen than mine to describe the interior of St. Mark's. I remem-

ber being so dazzled by the richness of the design that I stood for a long time in one of the galleries seeking to obtain a bird's eye view of the whole, looking at the ceilings, walls and furnishings that presented a medley of pillars, mausoleums, monuments and chapels each with its elaborate adornments. It is a gorgeous spectacle, and it is to be hoped that its spiritual value to the worshippers coincides with or exceeds its natural beauty and worth. These worshippers are always to be seen in it kneeling in prayer.

At the front is the altar under which rests the body of St. Mark. Near it is the screen called Pala d'oro formed by sheets of gold and gilt silver. Its surface is studded with sacred pictures and with more than 2000 precious gems. Over these the guide passed his candle that we might see them and observe their glitter.

We also visited the Treasury chambers underneath, to see which a small fee is charged. These are the repositories of many precious works of art, vases, boxes, crystals, agates, alabaster, some of which contained sacred relics. They are all supposed to be of inestimable value and have been collected through the centuries from Constantinople, Acre and other conquered cities and countries.

I must now tell you of our visit to the Ducal palace and the prison adjoining. First, look at the outside, one facade is almost in line with the Cathedral, the south facade faces, the sea and the third is on the side of the prison. In the interior is a courtyard which is reached through an ornamental door-way next to the Cathedral. Each facade is well worth looking at and its architecture has been praised by John Ruskin in his writings. The lower portions of the walls have two rows of arches, the upper ones being double in number those of

the lower, about 72 in each facade. In the centre of the two walls are decorative galleries from which proclamations used to be made to the people in the days of the Republic. The upper portions of the walls are much plainer than the lower, being broken only by some windows and the galleries mentioned. The interior is composed of many halls and vestibules and the Doge's chapel, all embellished with pictures and statues. The upper story is reached by the Giant staircase so called from two giant statues that adorn it.

The largest of the halls is called the Throne Room and is 50 yards long, 34 broad and 17 high. It was in this imposing hall that the Doge gathered his councillors, the 500 senators, each seated in separate stalls with the Knights of the Gold Stole and nobles of every rank to deliberate on matters of state.

There, too is the largest picture in the world, as John Ruskin calls "the Glories of Paradise" which occupies one complete wall. It is not as gloomy a picture as is "The Last Judgment" in the Sistine chapel at Rome. The prison house across the narrow canal is reached through the Bridge of Sighs. Its corridor is divided into two parts, so that those coming back from the prison and those going may not see each other. The cells there are in two storeys, the lower ones being on a level with the ground floor. These cells are small, dark and gloomy and on their walls are some very curious writings done by the prisoners. One, written by a priest who was betrayed by a friend, begins with, "God preserve us from friends". There was a torture chamber which we did not see, but the guide showed us the cell in which Byron stayed for four days so that he might get a clear conception of what confinement there meant and its reaction on the mind. The bodies of convicts who died

there were lowered into gondolas in the night and disposed of in some way.

But let us now look at some other aspects of Venetian life. On the way from the Rialto bridge to St. Mark's we found many interesting shops where dresses, shawls and ornaments of all kinds might be purchased. Shawls of black silk with long fringe, worn so frequently by the women, had their counterparts there in coloured silk ones, such as mauve, blue, yellow, all with very long fringes and with some embroidery work on them. These found a ready sale when seen by the tourists. There were also the knitted silk gowns so fashionable in those days for which there was a great demand—the factories working day and night to fill all the orders given them.

On the Rialto bridge there are twelve shops on each side stocked with dress goods of many kinds, greatly visited by the general public and thus proving to be a good shopping centre. The centre of the bridge has the usual openings to allow one to gaze along the canal. This bridge is near the centre of the Grand Canal that passes throughout the whole city something in the shape of an "S". It divides Venice into two unequal parts. The length of the canal is said to be 4150 yards and its average breadth is 60 yards, and when it is traversed in a gondola, its banks form a most attractive sight with their rows of palaces and other fine buildings, the shadows of which are cast in the water. There are about 150 canals in the main part of the city and these are crossed by 364 bridges large and small. The canal or lagoon of the Guidecca separates the island of that name from the mainland and it is through this channel that the arrival and departure of steamers and ships of all kinds take place.

The gondola is painted black, has a covered

portion in the centre for the visitors to occupy and the gondolier is always at hand with his pole or oars to impel the craft through the water. He often wears a sash of a bright colour which gives him a a picturesque appearance. There are also steam launches that may be hired if the visitor wishes to take a longer or a more rapid trip anywhere, but I usually preferred to take the leisurely trip in the gondola when on a tour of sight-seeing around the city. One cannot admire the rather unsightly poles that rise out of the water for the mooring of boats, but I suppose that they are a necessity as many lines of buildings are close to the water's edge.

I never tired of sitting on the balcony of the hotel watching the people pass on the street below, and the passage of the boats on the water. Sometimes a funeral would pass with a boat or two heaped with wreathes and flowers and with the coffin covered with these beautiful tokens of love and friendship. Sometimes it would be a market gardener taking his load of vegetables to market, and often it would be merrymakers either going to or returning from a wedding. The policemen, too, going about in their picturesque cloaks and hats, always two together, were an unusual sight for our foreign eyes.

There were other Britishers and some Americans in the hotel with whom we had happy intercourse and one lady often went with us when we went farther afield on some trips that I will describe later on. She was an acquisition to our party as she could speak Italian well. The hotel was a good one, large enough to require some directions when I first arrived. For instance, when in the hall upstairs, I inquired the way to reach the dining room, I was told to follow the white strip of matting laid on the floor and staircase and it would lead me

to it. That seemed like the parable of the White Way that we should travel to reach the banquetting hall above and the white way to our journeys end.

One item on the menu I shall always remember as it proved to be a new way to make tasty soup. The foundation of the dish was clear soup, but into it was dropped a cup custard and the waiter brought around a bowl of grated cheese which we were supposed to sprinkle liberally over the surface. I don't know if that is a typically Italian dish or not, but it was good and nourishing. The large dining room had many oil paintings on the walls and we discovered that they were painted by the head waiter who was pleased when we praised his workmanship.

One Sunday we missed being present at the Scotch church service as it was over when we arrived, but we were able to attend an Anglican service which we enjoyed very much. At the close the Chaplain very kindly took us over the building, pointing out to us a window dedicated to Robert Browning. At this end of the city we were near the arsenal, the railway station and the bridge that leads to the mainland across which we were soon to pass when we took the trip to Padua. Near there was a fine picture gallery with 22 rooms which we explored and found interesting.

The bridge above mentioned is 3932 yards long and 10 yards wide supported on 222 large arches with some smaller ones, and is very substantially built to endure the heavy train loads that roll over it continually.

Some of our first visits to the environs of Venice were to the islands that skirt the lagoon on the east of the city. The beaches of the city are subject to the ebb and flow of the tides and have to be protected from the force of the

waves by the building of many dykes and huge walls. But even then St. Mark's Square has often been inundated for a time. Thus outside the lagoon the many groups of islands help to preserve the city from the heavy roll of the tide. The chief of these is perhaps the Lido—a long island that stretches well into the Adriatic. This island is the fashionable watering place for the Venetians and in summer it is a great resort for the foreign class of visitors.

By steam launch it can be reached in twenty minutes and by gondola in half-an-hour. Steamers have their regular schedule for the trips, and from the Railway station during the season a special express boat takes visitors to the hotel there seven times a day. We took the trip by a steam launch that was well filled with passengers who proved quite interesting to us. The young Italian lads on the boat were very bright and merry, chattering constantly in that tongue unknown to us. I noticed that they had a special haircut of their own, the hair being very short at the back and quite bushy on the top of the head. Those who didn't wear hats had trouble with the ruffling of their locks in the strong wind.

On arriving at the Lido's pier we planned our day to see the hotels, bathing places, parks and other places of interest and to spend some time on the beaches, gathering shells and watching the waves roll in. Beside the well-paved road that runs through the town, there are at least two magnificent hotels, as well as many smaller ones. These two were remarkable for size and beauty, rivalling those to be seen at other fashionable resorts and one could judge that they catered for the wealthy class. We went into the rotunda or entrance halls of both and found much to admire in them, with their sumptuous furnishings, their palms and other plants.

We were told that some of these hotels furnished every kind of treatment customary for the benefit of their clients and for the cure of rheumatism and debilitating troubles. Some of these hotels had private beaches and beach cottages and seemed to be well patronized judging by the rows of bathing houses that were lined up along the shore.

The water of the sea is warm during the summer and the air balmy and pure making this resort one well suited for a holiday. We returned to Venice by the same steamer feeling rested and refreshed.

Our second trip was to three islands where we had a glimpse of some of the industries carried on in them. One rule of the boat seemed to be that when we had found a seat we should keep the same place no matter how often we left the boat and returned to it. This prevented any kind of crowding or unpleasantness.

The first island was called Murano where we went to see the glass works that have earned fame for themselves throughout the whole world. Entering one of the large factories we saw furnaces in full blast and men around them with long tubes through which they were blowing with glass bubbles forming at the ends. In the furnaces were the glass mixtures of silica-sand, soda, lime etc. with the colouring matter also I suppose. Some factories I am told, have up to 300 different mixtures to work with, each being mixed according to the purpose for which the glass will be used. The tubes have a knob at the end with which they gather as much of the molten glass as is necessary for the object to be made. It is rolled a little over the metal edge of the furnace and then blown until the bubble forms and reaches the size required after which it is shaped when in that plastic state. The glass is both slow to melt and also slow to cool, so that much can be done

with it when it is in that taffy-like state. Some of the men scattered their delicate glass fragments towards the crowd of onlookers which, after fluttering in the air, we were able to catch and keep as mementoes of the visit.

Venice has been noted since the middle ages for her glass manufactures and for long she tried to keep the method of making it a secret. In Murano, the furnaces used to be fired behind locked doors and the factories were patrolled by armed guards, while artisans, who tried to escape and sell the secrets, were put to death even by the dread council of ten. Of late years this work has been greatly revived and improved, so that one factory in Venice city and those in Murano now employ more than 1000 men.

Some one has written the following, "Perhaps industry's closest approach to a god-like act of creation is that of the glass-blower who pulls from the fiery furnace a gob of molten earth-stuffs and literally breathes into it a form of imperishable beauty".

As the silica-sand is one of the earth's commonest ingredients, God surely must have inspired the one who found out how to change it into this substance that is so useful and beautiful withal.

In Rome I purchased some of their bead necklaces made from alabaster, the so-called Roman pearls, but I found them to be of no value as the heat of the neck spoiled the beads. It is quite otherwise with the Venetian beads that endure and remain beautiful.

The second island visited was that of Burano and is the place where the Venetian lace industry is carried on. The work has been revived in late years and so at this place we saw a room full of young ladies with their instructors all busy making these delicate pieces of work.

In this island there are said to be about 1000 engaged in the lace work out of a population of 8000. Some were making lace designs on handkerchiefs, collars, doilies and other small articles while others were doing advanced work on tablecloths, dresser covers and other large pieces of cloth. The work is so fine that one can understand why such high prices are asked for the finished article.

The last island touched that day was Torello. It is now a deserted place though formerly it must have been well populated judging by the number of buildings to be seen which are still standing though in a ruinous state. It was said to be the attacks of malaria suffered by the people that first decimated its inhabitants and at last induced them all to leave.

We looked at the ruins of palaces, monuments, the cathedral and a church near it, also of the Council House erected in the 13th century. In the cathedral we could see the large mosaic piece over the door, the font of holy water, the flooring and other parts. The Baptistery nearby still shows its octagonal shape and was built in the 10th century.

The air is healthier now, but the inhabitants have not returned. Our trip back to Venice was enjoyable as usual.

I will now mention two trips to the continent that we made by day returning to the hotel at night.

One was to Padua, a very modern-looking town. The trip there gave us a pleasant drive in a taxi across the long bridge with a driver certified as a good guide. I remember the drive better than I do the city, but I looked at it with some interest remembering that it was the home of Portia, the heroine of Shakespeare's play, "The Merchant of Venice". On the way back we visited a palace now used as a showplace,

one in which Napoleon often stayed and where his rooms were shown. The ancient guide spoke in a rhyming sing-song tone in Italian, that only one of the party could understand, but the other two had fun listening to his amusing voice as he almost sang the little lectures he had learned by rote.

The second trip was to a thermal spring's establishment which is a resort for invalids and others. There was a fine hotel there where we had lunch, after which we explored the thermal springs on the grounds. One part had a series of rustic grottoes where steam baths could be taken at different temperatures and near them was a warm mud bath where people could wallow in this awful mire as long as they desired.

Our English friend planned to return a few days later to undergo a course of treatment there.

Our other visit paid that day was to the house of Petrarcha the poet, our Petrarch. We read of him being in southern France, but he seems to have spent his last days in the hill country of Italy. Here nature seemed to be at its best as the view from his window was a charming one of hill and vale. We saw his arm chair and his white cat which had been stuffed and placed there to give one an idea of his simple domestic life. Perhaps we know very little about this famous man, but evidently he is not forgotten in Italy where they keep his house intact for the public to view.

The time came all too soon to bring our visit in Venice to a close and to bid good-bye to our host, the patron of the hotel. He told us that he was in San Francisco at the time of the earthquake and fire with an uncle who lost his restaurant and business through the holocaust. From there he went to Detroit, where he mar-

ried our kindly hostess, the Patrona, who had made our stay so pleasant. We left with bag and baggage in the hotel gondola for the railway station, escorted by the hotel handyman, who told us that he was an Austrian, unmarried, and that he would never marry an Italian girl, because he didn't like them. He would never, no never, marry one of them!

Bologna and Other Places

A friend and I arrived at Bologna one afternoon from Venice and found accommodation in a hotel that was situated on the outskirts of a park. Nearby was one of the monuments that can be seen in some of the city's public places, this one being a war memorial that celebrated a victory gained over the Austrians.

We followed here our usual plan of seeing as many as possible of the sights of the place and soon learned to find our way around. The open-air Saturday market took my fancy as, in the space allotted to it, could be seen a display of almost every kind of goods that people could desire, while the country people in charge of the stalls and the numerous purchasers proved interesting to us foreigners. Among other things my friend invested in some tortoise-shell articles which pleased her very much and were not expensive.

We took one tram ride through the city that led us eventually up a hillside to a place where a church and a hospital dominated the scene. We lingered long on the steps of the church as from it a wonderful panoramic view of the city could be obtained. We had been told that Bologna was called the city of towers, having at least twenty-eight of them, and so from there we could see the majority of them

towering above the surrounding buildings forming conspicuous landmarks.

On entering the church our guide, a woman, quickly covered her head, and led us reverently around the sacred edifice. The hospital next door held more of interest for us as on our gazing down the long central corridor, I thought that perhaps this was the very largest hospital that I had ever seen. So long was it that the nurses and others moving about at the farther end looked quite small. While there I could not help thinking of a poem I have long loved and read many times. It is called "The Sermon In The Hospital" by Ugo Bassi, written by an admirer of his to perpetuate a sermon she had heard him preach in a hospital in Rome.

The foreword of that booklet contains these words:

Fra Ugo Bassi, Servant of our Lord,
One of the order of St. Barnabas,
The Sons of Consolation—late of Rome,
Born in Bologna and brought back of God,
There for His sake to die when all was done.

Ugo Bassi had taken for his text that day the words of Christ, "I am the true Vine, ye are the branches". In it he describes the suffering of the vine, whose way is not of pleasure nor of ease. He tells how closely it is confined, bound to a stake, and how the husbandman prunes it with cuts deep and sure unsparing for its tenderness and joy. He describes also how the bunches are thinned out so that they ripen into fruit more full and precious to the purple prime. Then comes the harvesting of the ripened fruit until the vine is stripped and desolate, having given all. Now it enters its time of darkness enduring the long winter of cold and snow until the spring comes round when it blooms again:—

Not bitter for the torment undergone,
Nor barren for the fulness yielded up,
But fulfils itself in love once more.

His lessons to all sufferers were in words like these:—

"Measure your life by loss instead of gain,
Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth,
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice,
And whoso suffers most hath most to give.

There in that house of suffering in his home town were scores of people needing such a ministry of love to enable them to endure their pains and anquish and to take comfort from such words as:

He gives his angels charge of those who sleep,
But He watches with those who wake.

And again,

Look not on thine own loss but look beyond,
And take the cross for glory and for guide.

Some of the aforementioned towers were so lofty that they formed a tall square mass of masonry against the background of the sky. Two of the loftiest were within walking distance from our hotel and on nearing them one looked so decidedly out of the straight that I preferred not to pass beneath it.

Of the sights in the city I remember one church with such gigantic air space inside that I thought it must be the largest I had ever seen. The entrance door was also very high through which we had a view of the piazza Victtoria Emmanuele and the palatial municipal building beyond. Another large square contained a remarkable fountain and seemed to be a terminus for the tram cars as they made a circuit of it before emerging once more. One interesting ride on the tram took us to the outside of the

city through one of the large gates to a place where on a hillside nearby could be seen the sanctuary of St. Luke, but on gazing at its lofty elevation we preferred not to make the ascent in order to inspect it.

We visited the museum but of all the things I saw there I wish to mention only one which was most vividly impressed on my mind and of which I have a copy. It was described to us as an original picture by the great artist Guido Reni which he called Ecce Homo. It depicted the sadly impressive face of the Christ, with eyes uplifted, and with the head crowned with thorns. Many copies of it can be seen in other places so that it has become well-known. The crown of thorns is a symbol of Christ's sufferings and of man's hate, but we can now take comfort in the thought that

"The head that once was crowned with thorns,
Is crowned with glory now,
A royal diadem adorns
The mighty victor's brow.

But soon we had to take leave of this place—a city that has been fought for so gallantly by the allies during the last war and so stoutly defended by the enemy. One's heart aches for the suffering and destruction involved.

Before passing away from Italy, I would like to mention shortly a few other towns and cities it was my privilege to visit, the memory of which is imprinted on my mind and stimulated by the pictures of them which I possess. For instance, in Genoa, the Beautiful, who could forget the handsome memorial to Christopher Columbus erected in the park and the small vine-clad building on the hill that is said to mark the site of the old home of the explorer. It has an inscription written in Latin on the side. There too, is perhaps the most

beautiful cemetery in the world with its three miles of covered colonnades bordered on both sides by sculptured marble monuments (many of which are wondrously designed), and with the one million other tombs and monuments in the open-air part of the spacious grounds. We examined carefully the tombs in the colonnades and were present at a funeral service held in the chapel, which itself contained some beautiful and artistic figures in marble.

Genoa is certainly a beautiful city with its fine harbour and lighthouse and the ridge above (reached by a funicular railway) adorned with many fine residences.

Then too, go with me in thought to Milan, the city that contains the magnificent cathedral of white marble, so adorned and carved that its exterior presents a lace-like appearance. In the old Chateau or Costello Sforxesco, now used as a museum, I especially noticed the pictures of John Huss, the religious reformer, who suffered death for his faith. Some of the pictures represented him in a prison cell being tempted to recant from his so-called heresies. In the sacristy nearby is the original painting of the Last Supper by Leonardo da Vinci, now badly damaged, and with the figures hardly discernible, but a beautiful copy of it can be seen in the museum. This picture, too, has been copied so often that everyone in our day is familiar with it.

There, too, in Milan we can walk under the spacious covered galleries of Vittoria Emmanuele and meet with city people in great numbers who spend their leisure hours there walking, partaking of refreshments, or for other social or business purposes. It is a very interesting inland city situated in the midst of the great plain of Lombardy.

My mention of the next three places results

from a long-felt desire I had to pay a visit to some of the less-known inland towns situated on spurs of the rugged mountain range of the Apennines, far remote from the more modern cities of the plains. This I did leaving Rome one morning by train and arriving first at Assisi. This, and many other towns on the hills were founded in pre-historic days by the Umbrians and the Etruscans and, after passing through very troublous times, have now gained a measure of tranquility and prosperity under the Kingdom of Italy. In Assisi pagan Rome built temples which were later changed into Christian churches under the Papacy. The town was occupied by the French under Napoleon, but after his downfall it became part of the Papal states once more, and remained so until Sept. 1870 when it was taken over by Italy.

This is the birthplace of the saintly St. Francis. Of him it is written that, "The pure-souled saint of Umbria, born in 1182 with his simplicity, love of God and creation, like a magic charm drew all to him, and instead of war and unrest he substituted peace and goodness." In his memory two churches have been erected there, one on top of the other, both of which merit a visit and closer inspection than I was able to give them. In the centre of the nave of the lower church two staircases lead down to the crypt and the tomb of St. Francis. His body was refound and placed there in 1920. In the upper church there are 28 frescoes depicting the life of St. Francis, one in which he is preaching to the birds and another in which he gives his mantle to a poor soldier.

From the Grand Subasio Hotel, where we stayed, and from other parts of this elevated town one can get a fine view of the surrounding plains and of the hills showing the town of

Perugia on one of them in the distance. On a hill overlooking the town is the fortress of Rocca which with its towers was once considered impregnable but now is in a rather ruinous state.

Perugia, the next town visited was founded by the Etruscans and still bears traces of their occupation, notably one huge Etruscan gateway and some existing walls, but the majority of the wall-bricks have been carried away for the construction of new buildings. This town has many levels and narrow streets some of which are fitted with steps where the slope is steepest. It has fine hotels and seems to be quite an important place. I visited the Saturday market, had a drive around the town and on Sunday, while reading a book in the park, became the centre of a group of boys who were eager to show me how much English they had learned at school. The church of St. Peter's is an interesting one and in the museum there are twenty-three rooms displaying many Etruscan and Roman objects such as urns, bronzes, vases, etc. The town Hall is a large oblong-shaped building in front of which there is a very large and ornamental fountain.

Quite a long train journey took us to the third place I wish to mention viz, Siena, a journey which required us to change trains twice en route. On the way we passed around three sides of the beautiful Trasimeno Lake on which there seemed to be a good deal of movement that day, chiefly sea-planes alighting, and after moving for a distance over the water rising again to fly away over the mountains. These seemed to return again and again, thus giving their pilots plenty of practice in this kind of manoeuvering.

A drive across the plain from the station brought us to the ancient walled city built on a hillside and after passing through one of the

outer gates and driving through many narrow streets, we arrived at the pension where we found other English-speaking guests and soon began to feel at home. An inscription over the entrance gate says that Siena opens her heart to receive her visitors. This is a larger city than the last two mentioned and contains many art treasures and historical buildings that would require a long time to examine and learn to appreciate as they deserve to be. This city has taken the wolf with the twins as its emblem from the time of its founding as a Roman colony, but its authentic history dates only since about 1200 A.D.

I liked the old city very much with its narrow streets, lofty buildings, towers and strong gates so deeply carved and all its old-world appearance. Its Duomo, from a little romantic nucleus, has been enlarged several times and now towers above the surrounding houses and seems to dominate the religious life of Siena. The baptistery near it is another fine building and has a font connected with such famous sculptors as Donatello and Ghiberti.

In the basilica of St. Dominco I sought out especially the chapel of St. Catherine, the patron saint of Siena. It is said that in a time of strife between rival factions in the city she stood out, through her faith in God, as one who could speak with a tone of command to both sovereigns and pontiffs alike, and achieve success though not without suffering on her own part. In this chapel she is depicted in almost a fainting condition supported by two friends, showing in her hands the stigmata or print of the nails, as one who like her Master was bearing the sufferings of the world. Another interesting building is the Communal Palace which dominates the civic life of the city. Its library is said to contain 90,000 volumes and 80,000 pamphlets and among its oth-

er treasures can be seen the Greek Gospels, brought long ago from Byzantium, with covers of raised gold ornamented with reliefs of the finest enamel.

I must now tell you a little about the modern part of the city which I visited several times. In it one sees, high up on the hilly portions, many beautiful modern homes with well kept lawns, and gardens aglow with flowers, and we learn that this part is largely inhabited by foreigners and wealthy Sienese who like the open spaces and modern comforts. The city is said to attract many students from America and Britain on account of the good educational facilities it offers. One day when I was driving around this part a band was playing in the park where scores of people were seated listening to the music, while others were walking about or engaging in games of various kinds. Here we could see one terminus of the old stone wall of the city, it being no longer needed by the dwellers in the open spaces, this being an extension of the city below. Siena is extensive in size, being built in the form of a "Y", the houses mounting up the hill sides in three directions from the central portion. It is good to learn that it was not destroyed and hardly touched as the war swept past its borders.

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